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57th year of publication

Blessings beget blessings for Christian Credit Union

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REME RUDYK FOR CHRISTIAN CREDIT UNION

Representatives of three Christian schools in Alberta show off the gifts they received from the Christian Credit Union at its 50th anniversary celebration.

Jessie Schut

EDMONTON — The story of the Christian Credit Union, Ltd., which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary by giving away a half million dollars, could be titled "The Little Bank that Could."

What started out as a few poor immigrants in Edmonton pooling their nickels and dimes to help each other is now a full-service, $50 million financial institution serving the needs of more than 6,000 people across Alberta. It's a one-of-a-kind organization serving a Reformed community of various stripes, and supporting its related organizations and members of those organizations.

Organized by Dutch immigrants

The Edmonton Christian Reformed Savings and Credit Union, as it was then called, was organized in 1952 by Dutch immigrants. Herman Wierenga, field man for the Christian Reformed Church, helped the new Canadians find jobs and homes, and also helped them establish a financial institution to fund their homes, businesses, churches and schools. The initial capital contributed by the 15 members totaled $83.75. Wierenga became member #1.

His widow Harriet, 85, recalls those early days. Most of the immigrants were farmers. "Nobody had a lot of money," she said. "But I think they needed togetherness. Most of them didn't speak English, and the little English they did speak didn't help them when they went to the bank.

"My husband spoke English, and they could work together. I think it was a good thing for all of them."

Leen Kranenburg, 85, who arrived in 1951 with his wife and three children, agrees that language was a big factor in bringing the original group together. "You were glad to meet together so you could talk to someone from the old country," he says.

Kranenburg recalls that his family's first home was a chicken coop, and only a few people in the community had cars. But on Sundays, someone would pick his family up for church, and they looked forward to that occasion. Immigrants worked long, hard hours for low wages, but they saved everything so they could one day achieve their dreams.

"We were just a little community, we came here broke, we couldn't bring money from Holland," he recalls. "We talked things over together — especially when we were so poor, we wanted to try something that might turn out okay. It was the immigrant spirit — we didn't have much to lose, after all."

The initial organization consisted of a Board, a Credit Committee which approved loans, and a Supervisory Committee that safeguarded the interests of the members. This organizational structure is still in place today. In addition, it operates with a general

See **CREDIT UNION** *p. 2...*

Ontario government publishes education tax credit guidelines

Alan Doerksen

ANCASTER, Ont. — After consulting with agencies such as the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS) and the Canadian Council of Christian Charities (CCCC), the Ontario government has produced guidelines for its new education tax credit. The guidelines were sent out in February and take effect this month.

The new guidelines deal with issues such as who will qualify for tax receipts, what size a school needs to be to qualify, and what information schools will need to provide to parents of students and the Ontario government.

Independent Christian schools need not be large at all to qualify. The guidelines require that a school must have at least five eligible students throughout each school term. Eligible schools need to offer their programs mainly in Ontario, and schools must require all students to take not less than 75 per cent of their courses in Ontario.

Criminal checks

Each independent school will need to arrange for criminal reference checks on all individuals connected with the school who come into regular contact with students. These can be requested from local police stations.

Each school will need to provide a statement of information to

See **NEW RULES** *page 2...*

CHRISTIAN COURIER FILES

Starting this month, independent Christian schools in Ontario will need to follow new guidelines connected with the education tax credit.

News

Credit union finds connection between faith, prayer, management

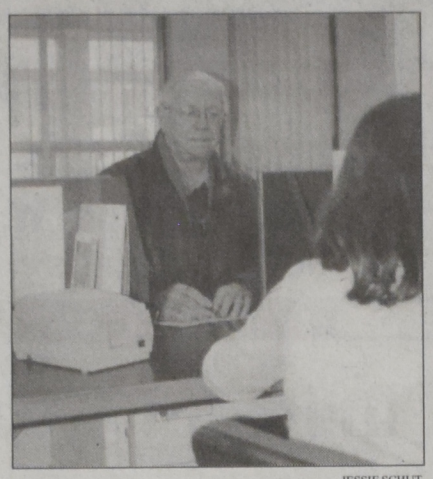
... *continued from page 1*
manager, Peter Lindhout, and a staff of 11.

The story of the organization is one of growth and blessings. In 1952, members could only make deposits every 14 days. Board meetings were conducted in Dutch and held in members homes. In spite of its small beginnings, by the end of the first year, the institution had grown to 130 members with assets of almost $14,000.

Changing to English

As business grew, the early board members had to contend with such issues as increasing office space, conducting their business in English rather than Dutch, and deciding whether they should offer chequing accounts. (The level of profitability was considered insufficient to take on the additional risk, and the proposal was defeated at the January 1958 meeting. It was later approved at a special meeting in June of 1960.)

Members also had to decide whether to join the Central League of Credit Unions. Minutes of that meeting recorded the decision not to join because "board meetings on Sunday and dinner dances on Sunday, we do not agree with that." When the President of Credit Union of Alberta assured Christian Credit Union that no meetings were held on Sunday, the board asked for this commitment to be written into the constitution.



JESSIE SCHUT

Leen Kranenburg, 85, a founding member, has been banking at the Christian Credit Union for 50 years.

Over the years, more changes came. A full-time manager was appointed in 1961, and branch offices were opened. In 1969, the organization consolidated by purchasing an office at its present central location. It changed its name, dropping Edmonton and the Christian Reformed designation to become more accessible to the whole Reformed Community. It began offering long-term mortgages, and by 1987 had grown to 3,200 members with $16 million in assets. Today, it offers a full range of banking services to its 6,000 members stretched across the province. It also offers a personal banking service, visiting several senior's facilities, the local Christian schools, and Trinity Christian School in Calgary once a week to conduct banking transactions off-site for its members.

Since its founding, the organization has continuously served the Reformed Christian community as it lives up to its stated commitment: "to serve God in service to each other and the Christian community."

A higher purpose

"We understand the practical connection between faith, prayer, and corporate management. We are motivated by a higher purpose, not ever higher profitability," states the Christian Credit Union's 50th anniversary booklet. "After paying our expenses and providing for prudent reserves, the remaining economic benefits go back to our membership through profit sharing and gifts to Christian schools and organizations. Our goal is to provide financial benefits to the Reformed community."

Peter Lindhout, general manager, says the organization can give so much money away because it operates very efficiently, has a low overhead, and has an excellent record of customers repaying their loans. Members must be from the Reformed Christian community, or members of organizations originating in the Reformed Christian community; and, he admits, the Calvinist work ethic probably does factor into the agency's success.

"Members know that's what we are all about," he says. "We exist to be of service to the Christian community." This includes offering educational seminars on such topics as retirement planning, home buying, and investing; the low fee charged for these courses is donated to charitable causes.

John Van Etten, who has served on the Credit Committee for 31 years, says when he joined shortly after arriving in Canada, expectations of membership were clearly defined. "It was explained to us that it was set up to help churches, and organizations. The money that was made through the years was given back to the community.

"We can see it has been really successful and blessed by the Lord. Many people have been helped. There's always a friendly staff, they do their best to help people, members care for each other."

Since 1990, the Christian Credit Union has given away $2.3 million in profit-sharing and gifts, supporting such diverse projects as gymnasium score boards at a local Christian High School, choir robes for The King's University College choir, and a group home for persons with mental disabilities.

Largest-ever donation

This year's half-million dollar gift, presented at a community gala celebration featuring choirs, bands and soloists from the Reformed community, is the largest donation in its history. Six Christian schools across the province received gifts varying from $5,100 for Rocky Christian School for playground equipment and $6,900 for Coaldale Christian School for equipment and furnishings to $250,000 for Edmonton Christian School's capital campaign for its $5 million expansion. As well, the Christian Senior Citizen's Society of Northern Alberta (Emmanuel Home) received $150,000 for its planned long term care facility.

When the gifts were announced at the end of the concert, the full-house crowd at the Francis Winspear Centre erupted in cheers and applause. "I was walking on air," says Joanne Munro, chair of the Edmonton Christian School's board, who received the gift on stage. "It's unbelievable."

Harriet Wierenga, 85, whose late husband helped establish the institution, says, "This is *our* bank — it's like a co-op. You seem to belong together, to give each other support through the hard times and the good times."

New rules won't be intrusive for Christian schools

... *continued from page 1*
the Ontario Ministry of Finance, to parents or guardians of current students, and to parents or guardians who are considering enrolling their children there. The main purpose of this statement is to help parents make an informed choice about their children's education, according to the guidelines.

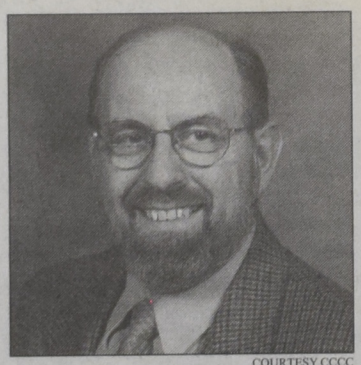
The statement needs to include information such as a detailed description of each school's academic program, including the school's teaching philosophy and how its academic program differs from those of other schools. The guidelines also require each school to outline the professional credentials of its teachers, and give a brief history of the school. Each school needs to provide information about pupil health and safety, and state whether there is a code of conduct for pupils or staff.

Schools don't have to disclose financial statements, but they must explain whether or not such statements are available to parents of students or potential students.

The guidelines explain that only parents or legal guardians of an eligible child can get tax receipts.

Rules not intrusive

Reacting to the guidelines, John Vanasselt, director of communications for OACS, says, "Our response is quite favorable. We don't think they're intrusive." He observes that the government's approach in the guidelines seems to be "that independent schools are like a business. They offer a product."



COURTESY CCCC

Dick Kranendonk

Last September, OACS took part in government consultations with agencies such as OACS and CCCC, which are directly impacted by the tax credit. "The Alliance submitted a brief and participated in those hearings," explains Vanasselt. As the government developed the guidelines, later on, "we were consulted significantly," he notes.

Vanasselt feels the guideline's demand for statements of information is reasonable. "We had suggested that schools ought to disclose the general parameters of their education.... We thought that was completely appropriate.... Our schools have most of that information available anyway."

Criminal reference checks are not a surprise for Vanasselt. They have been in effect at OACS-affiliated schools since 1997.

Indirect benefit

Last fall, Vanasselt told *Christian Courier* he felt that "any individual who pays for a child's education should be able to claim" the education tax credit. Although the new guidelines say only parents or guardians can get the tax credit, Vanasselt observes that is "not particularly problematic for parents in Alliance schools." He explained how grandparents of a student could still get an indirect benefit by giving tuition money to the child's parents to pay, and later getting any tax refund back from them.

To help OACS-related schools follow the guidelines, OACS has prepared and is sending out to schools a three-page electronic template "which helps schools focus on the right information," says Vanasselt.

This year, schools will need to submit guideline-related information to the Ontario government by March 31, explains Vanasselt. In future years, they will need to submit this information by the end of February.

Dick Kranendonk, director of stewardship services for CCCC, says the guidelines are close to the recommendations his agency made to the government. "We dealt more with principles" — rather than specifics, he adds. CCCC has been working very closely with OACS on this issue.

Kranendonk asserts, "I think the regulations are great.... The guidelines clearly confirm the government does not want any control; they want choice in education." His agency had suggested the government leave the choice of schools open to parents to decide.

Like Vanasselt, Kranendonk sees the criminal reference check as "absolutely ... reasonable for schools. We have been advising schools to do this for at least five years." Getting such police reports helps protect Christian schools from liability.

But Kranendonk sees one flaw with the tax credit itself. "The unfortunate thing is that those parents who need help the most will get the least," he contends. "Families that have no taxable income can't claim that [tax credit] on their tax return. That's because the tax credit is not refundable. That's the only thing in there that's unfortunate." Kranendonk believes that problem should have been sorted out before the tax credit was introduced last year.

News/Politics

Church Council critical of government's stand on Afghanistan

Alan Doerksen

OTTAWA — The Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC) is upset about Canada's current role in Afghanistan, where Canadian troops are working under the command of the American military. In response, CCJC has sent a letter expressing its concerns to Defence Minister Art Eggleton, as well as to all Members of Parliament.

Michael Maher, president of CCJC, wrote to Eggleton: "Our national, ecumenical church coalition writes to express its grave concern over your words and your government's current policy regarding Canadian soldiers operating in Afghanistan who have turned over prisoners to the United States without guarantees of due justice process or that these prisoners will not ultimately receive the death penalty."

Moral, legal crossroads

"As horrific as the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 are, Canada finds itself at a moral and legal crossroads in determining its military and justice response, both alone, and in collaboration with its allies. We find it incongruent and objectionable that our Canadian government will uphold due process from our courts and not tolerate executions in this country while, at the same time, our Canadian government in its foreign policy will hand over people to another country who are still trying to figure out their policy on due process for these detainees and who favor the death penalty. Canada should not be part of this, even indirectly; not seeking guarantees in these matters from the U.S. government makes us responsible, in part, for what ultimately will happen to the detainees. We believe this touches on certain principles that many in our country consider sacrosanct. There are courageous moral lines in the sand, and we cross them at peril of the diminishment of every human being and our civilization.

COURTESY CCJC

Michael Maher

American leadership divided

"Your statement of Jan. 29th assures Canadians that international law will apply even though there is evidence to the contrary. American leadership is itself divided over this very point. There is debate in that country whether the detainees are prisoners of war and how to interpret international treaties and whether these treaties shall apply. All the while, the U.S. military and government detains with impunity individuals outside their borders, removed from the U.S. judicial system, and, seemingly, in their view, outside international law as well. Our soldiers in [asking] whether to hand over these prisoners need explicit instructions from you and the Canadian government that will conform to, and uphold, clear Canadian principles.

"In this regard, we are also troubled by your statement's reference to international law and your point that it allows for the death penalty, while you remain silent on Canada's leading abolitionist role at home and internationally against the death penalty.... We ask you as defence minister and we ask your cabinet colleagues to charter a truly Canadian course in these matters."

Response from Robinson

So far, CCJC has received no reply from Eggleton or any other members of the Liberal government to date, but has received responses from opposition MPs such as the NDP's Svend Robinson. Supporting CCJC's position, Robinson wrote:

"NDP leaders Alexa McDonough and our federal caucus have taken a strong stand on this issue since Sept. 11, calling for Canadian troops to be deployed only under the auspices of the United Nations and in accordance with international law. Unfortunately, the new year has seen Canadian forces sent to Afghanistan to join America-led missions conducted with dubious regard for human rights.....

"The Liberal government has not been adequately prepared to deal with the practical or legal implications of allowing Canadian soldiers to operate under American command. Canada has ratified the Geneva Conventions and has enacted domestic legislation to ensure that we abide by that commitment. And yet now the Liberal government shirks this responsibility by claiming that the United States can be trusted to treat captives taken in Afghanistan according to the precepts of international law.

"It is completely unacceptable that our government is allowing Canada's foreign policy decisions to be made increasingly by George W. Bush. Please be assured that I will continue to speak out for Canada's sovereignty and for a principled foreign policy based on the primacy of human rights and international law."

Abandoning peacekeeper role

Summarizing CCJC's main concerns, Maher says, "If there's any possibility of a death sentence, the Canadian government requires ... that the death penalty will not be used. That was our real concern....

"We felt there was a considerable contradiction with Canadian troops handing over prisoners in a questionable situation."

CCJC is not passing judgment on Canadian troops being in Afghanistan, although some of the agency's member groups are against that, explains Maher. "We would feel Canada has abandoned its role as a credible peacekeeper to be an armed combatant."

Maher is critical of George W. Bush and his leadership of the American forces. Bush's "Axis of Evil" concept is "rhetoric, and Americans love rhetoric," he asserts. "Rhetoric has a capacity to simplify issues" — making it easier to take sides on this issue.

"Why, in a crisis, do Americans tend to abandon the rule of law, on the part of the military, to escape the supervision of the courts?" asks Maher. He contends that the situation in Afghanistan is one where the rule of law is especially important.

Maher wants the Canadian government to change its tactics regarding the war in Afghanistan. "One clear obligation on the part of government is to decide if these prisoners are prisoners of war, and to extract from Americans that [there] won't be an act of adventurism to deal with them.... The suggestion we owe undivided loyalty to the Americans is a difficult concept to accept."

Saudi peace proposal is a place to start

Principalities & Powers
David T. Koyzis

It's been nearly seven years since my visit to the Middle East during the summer of 1995. In retrospect it seems that that summer was an uncharacteristic period of calm in an otherwise turbulent region of the world. There was considerable optimism over the future. The Oslo peace accords had only recently been concluded between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the newly established Palestinian Authority was in control of Jericho and the Gaza Strip.

Moreover, the border between Israel and Jordan had just been opened, and it was now possible to travel between the two countries over the shared Jordan River. Although the wait to cross was a lengthy one, with would-be tourists subjected to intense scrutiny by officials on both sides, at least the border was now passable, as it had not been for many decades. Optimism was in the air, and there was a general sense that peace might finally be at hand. After returning, I myself wrote in this space that people were weary of the violence and had a new resolve to live together despite their differences.

Renewed cycle of violence, reprisals

Unfortunately, Israelis and Palestinians are once again caught up in a renewed cycle of violence and reprisals that threatens to spin out of control. Each day brings word of yet another suicide bombing by Palestinians and subsequent retaliation by the Israeli government against buildings housing various agencies of the Palestinian Authority. The possibility of a general Middle Eastern war is perhaps greater now than at any time in nearly 30 years.

In the midst of this conflict, the Saudi government has made a proposal that some believe to be merely an exercise in public relations but which others, even within the Israeli government, are taking seriously. If Israel pulls back to its pre-1967 borders, the 22-member Arab League will recognize Israel's right to exist and normalize relations with the 54-year-old state. A Palestinian state could be established in the West Bank and Gaza, and the entire region could begin to rebuild after so many decades of turmoil.

Unfortunately, peace is not likely to come so easily. Even if all of the parties could be brought to the table to agree on such a settlement, other outstanding issues would remain to be worked out. The most significant of these is the status of Jerusalem. In 1947, when the new United Nations proposed a partition of the British mandate of Palestine between Jews and Arabs, they had intended to make Jerusalem an international zone, recognizing its importance to the three monotheistic religions. The subsequent war effectively destroyed this plan, and Israel made the western part of Jerusalem its national capital, the eastern part remaining in Jordanian hands.

The Jerusalem quandary

Because of Jerusalem's significance in the Jewish consciousness, it is not likely that Israel will acquiesce in relinquishing that city, or even in its division once again. But Palestinians consider Jerusalem their own capital with as strong a conviction as Israelis. So why not declare a united Jerusalem the capital of *two* countries, Israel and Palestine? Why not declare it joint territory to be administered by a bi-national municipal council? Clearly the status quo cannot continue indefinitely. Just as clearly, some sort of imaginative solution will be needed to break the deadlock and allow people to live side by side.

The Saudi proposal may not be perfect, and it may not ultimately prevent war. But with no other ideas forthcoming, it is at least a place to start.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario.

Editorial

Celebrating academic freedom in the Christian school

Harry der Nederlanden

In the last issue, I wrote a long and rambling review of several books about higher education in the Christian tradition and ended by alluding to the book by the former president of Calvin College, Anthony Diekema, entitled *Academic Freedom and Christian Scholarship*. It deserves more attention than I gave it.

The theme is one which the Reformed community has not discussed at any degree of intensity, even though we have founded several colleges and a sizeable school system. Everyone associated in any way with Christian education on any level ought to reflect on the themes Diekema introduces so masterfully. This book is first of all about academic freedom in higher education, but it has many implications for how we relate to the entire educational enterprise.

Strict version of Christian thought and behavior

Harry Boonstra, in his book *Our School*, devotes one chapter to the tensions the administration of Calvin College had to deal with almost since the beginning because anxious parents and zealous conservatives exerted strong pressure to make the students and faculty adhere to a strict version of Christian thought and behavior. In effect, they insisted that the school apply their family standards and their interpretation of the church's doctrines to the school, leaving little or no room for the considerable differences that exist within the Reformed community, to say nothing of the larger evangelical community.

Henry De Bolster, in his book about the founding of Redeemer, *Stepping Forward in Faith*, discusses at some length the difficulties he and the board experienced trying to gain accreditation as a liberal arts college. Secular academics cannot see how academic freedom can survive in a school dedicated to a Christian worldview, that will hire only Christian professors and that aspires to teach all subjects from a Christian point of view. To their way of thinking, the commitment to a single perspective spells bias, and this poisons the disinterested pursuit of truth, and destroys the freedom of the scholar or scientist to follow wherever his research leads.

Every Christian institution of higher learning has to wrestle with these two dimensions of academic freedom — on the one hand, the Christian freedom allowed within the school to students and teachers, and on the other, the freedom of a Christian school to teach from its unique perspective and have that enterprise recognized by society as a whole on an equal footing with secular institutions.

A twin struggle

But this twin struggle is not unique to higher learning. Our Christian grade schools and high schools are also often besieged by parents insisting that the school enforce a particular moral code or that the teachers be held to a strict version of origins. And they struggle non-stop with the relationship between the curriculum of the Christian school and the one taught in the public school: how parochial, how specific to the Reformed tradition do we tailor what we teach "our" children?

Diekema provides us with the conceptual tools to address this complex of issues and should be read by every teacher and board member. Christian freedom needs to be applied differently in the academic setting than in the family and in the church. How can we witness effectively to the liberating effect of faith in Christ to our society when in our schools we often repress differences of opinion with a heavy hand?

Pursuing truth without being intimidated

Diekema explains that the Christian academic enterprise requires that scholars and teachers be protected within certain clearly spelled out guidelines to be able to pursue truth without being intimidated by those who insist on clinging to the old ways. Without this protection, there can be no real progress and development, and the agenda will be controlled by that vocal minority of zealots that impose a law of conformity to the past. Robert Benne, in *Quality with Soul,* makes the point again and again that Calvin College was able to remain strong against the inroads of secularization not just because it had (has) a constituency that remains vitally involved with the school but also because that constituency kept itself informed theologically and philosophically about the central issues.

One of the important issues about which we as a supporting community for Christian education must educate ourselves is that of academic freedom. Unless we understand this idea, the Christian school movement will splinter into a host of little parochial schools that fail to witness to the ecumenical, liberating vision that a worldview rooted in the mind of Christ should exemplify.

It is true, of course, that in a Christian university the search for wisdom and the quest for truth is much more prominent than at the lower levels, because professors are expected to probe critically at the frontiers of thought and to challenge received opinion. But if that vision of a liberating truth is not kept alive at the lower levels, how do we get our children excited about the vision of Christian learning as a unique calling and a unique service to the Christian community? Good biblical doctrine and a staunch Christian worldview must not become identified with holding the line and constricting our minds; it must instead be experienced as a launching pad from which we are set free to explore the wonders of this created world.

Engaging alternative points of view

Diekema writes: "While the task of scholars at any college is to keep alive, develop, and pass along the root ideas of a culture (and its worldviews), and while the task of the scholars at a Christian college is to engage those ideas, to examine them, and to challenge or affirm them as consequential for the Christian faith, the committed scholar also feels the obligation to engage alternative points of view in order to learn from them, to be challenged by them and to bring a Christian witness to bear upon them." This is a better model for Christian education than that of the so-called "culture wars," with its exclusively oppositional emphasis.

In order to cultivate what Diekema calls "an ethos of freedom" throughout the educational enterprise, all Christian schools should do, on a different level perhaps, what Diekema advises for Christian (and all) colleges. As part of its confession and mission statement every Christian school should spell out what academic freedom means for the school and its teachers so that the latter are protected from undue meddling and bullying by vocal segments of the supporting community. A Christian scholar cannot do his work properly if he is constantly being harassed by laymen with specific agendas, telling him what he or she should be thinking. Something similar is true for all Christian teachers; they must be entrusted with a certain autonomy in the classroom. They are, after all, hired for their expertise.

Diekema suggests that every scholar should be asked to affirm a covenant that spells out his or her commitment to the mission of the school, a mission that is larger than parroting the narrow orthodoxies of the community. We don't expect a preacher to reflect our own opinions back to us but to challenge us with the truth; teachers have a similar task, translated to the school setting.

Every time new teachers are hired, Diekema proposes, why not hold a public ceremony in which the new teachers affirm their covenant with the community publicly so that they and the board and the larger community are reminded of the unique calling of scholarship within the Kingdom of God. That calling can be crippled just as much from within as from without. We are well advised to put in place policies to protect academic freedom, because we know that it needs to be protected from our own impulse to close our minds as from the intolerance of the secular mind.

Let's celebrate academic freedom at the beginning of every school year.

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Opinion

Can people of faith make a public difference for the common good?

Gerald Vandezande, C.M.

Some readers, both within and beyond the Reformed community, have responded differently to my article, "Nation without homelessness, hunger, poverty will have hope" (Feb. 11). Understandable so, given the diversity of life-perspectives that shape people's perceptions of Canada's economic, political and social realities.

A few people contended that bringing the homeless out of the cold and eliminating hunger and poverty in Canada are near-hopeless tasks. They argue that the structural obstacles are formidable and the financial resources and political will required are simply not there to launch the concerted, nation-wide efforts envisioned by the Campaign Against Child Poverty (CACP), Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), other faith-based community agencies, church organizations, and provincial coalitions; such as Ontario's Inter-faith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC).

Unlike others, these readers do not question the legitimacy of asserting: "Ways of life foster mutually respectful and mutually supportive relations among people who are created to be neighbors, who are called to love and respect each other by doing justice, showing mercy, and practicing faithfulness — in all their relations, professions, and occupations."

How can we mobilize more citizens and governments?

These friends do ask, however, what will it actually take to mobilize more fellow citizens and our federal and provincial governments to help build a nation in which justice and equity are becoming a visible way of life? They are dismayed that most elected representatives are still not showing the political conviction and their respective parties' inherent obligation to promote the common good based on public justice for all people.

Other readers wondered how we can more meaningfully make the vital connection between a living faith and public action in the service of community and national well-being. They ask: "How do we translate biblical commands, such as loving our neighbors and enemies, into political and economic principles and consistent policies and practices that demonstrate a positive determination to make a healing, lasting difference for desperate people in immediate need of communal love, mercy, justice and compassion?"

It is encouraging that more and more Christians are reflecting on the integral relationship between biblical faith and public life, between our Christian commitment and life-affirming politics. Such essential reflection should result in an open-hearted dialogue on *why* followers of Jesus can contribute to the actual meaning of daily *discipleship*; *what* we can articulate and communicate regarding the purpose of Canadian *citizenship*; and *how* we can advocate and demonstrate, in word-and-deed ministries, the concrete consequences of careful *stewardship* — all of which would flow from our daily walk with God in the good creation in harmony with God's Word for responsible living.

In view of all that is happening on the political front (think of the leadership races within the Canadian Alliance and the Ontario Progressive Conservative party and the contentious policy concerns that are being debated), there is plenty to think about and discuss!

How best to contribute to public life

The basic issues and key questions involving fundamental views and ways of life and what they imply for our culture, for various government obligations and societal responsibilities, for citizens' human rights and freedoms, non-government institutions' and organizations' different tasks clearly deserve further thoughtful discussion. We all need greater clarity on why, what, and how we, as people of faith, might best contribute to the public life in our country.

The Gospel requires us to do so in keeping with Jesus' challenging invitation to practice "justice, mercy, faithfulness, and love." (See Matt. 23:23 and Luke 11:42).

One of the major questions is: how can we, personally and communally, institutionally and organizationally, best be political leaven, light and salt in our multicultural, multi-faith, pluralistic society?

During my long-time involvement in Canadian politics on behalf of CPJ, and as a Volunteer Spokesperson on behalf of CACP, and during my ongoing contact and dialogue with senior policy-advisers and political decision-makers at Queen's Park and on Parliament Hill, I learned much as to how to be meaningfully engaged. I discovered that it is vital to the credibility of our citizenship participation that people of faith *earn* the right to be heard. This can be achieved partly because we have a relevant world-and-life view and political perspective to offer, and partly because we have specific policy proposals to contribute. Such perspective and proposals can make a substantial difference to the common good rooted in public justice for all people, without discrimination.

A heart-commitment of ultimate importance

In this context, I have usually defined "religion" as a *heart-commitment that is of ultimate importance* to a person, community, corporation, institution, organization or political party. In my experience, no person or structure is without core commitments and basic goals. They are always pursuing something that is of *ultimate* importance to them and to those who are in charge.

I have also found it quite helpful to develop and advance working definitions of *public justice* and the *common good*. Here they are:

Public Justice — CPJ asserts: "Public justice characterizes the government's task. Public justice requires government to use power in an equitable way. Governments must be aware of the different needs of diverse people, communities and organizations, and balance and promote their public claims so that each may have the freedom to fulfill their God-given calling and responsibilities without oppression either from the authorities or from one another." (Cf. CPJ's "Guidelines for Christian Political Service," II, A, 4, available for $3 from CPJ, 229 College St., Suite 311, Toronto, M5T 1R4.)

Common Good — The Catholic Health Association of Canada (CHAC) has articulated "the basic ethical principles involved in building a healthy economy and society" as follows: "According to the Church's social teachings, respect for the value and dignity of the human person lies at the centre of a healthy economy and society. Since all persons are made in the image of God, they have an inalienable right to the basic needs of life, namely, the right to adequate food, clothing, shelter, employment, education, healthcare, a clean environment and the right to participate in decisions affecting these rights. This is what is known as the principle of the common good. In effect, all persons in a given society should have, as a fundamental human right, common access to, and use of, those resources, goods and services that make for a more fully human life. All other rights whatsoever," the Church proclaims, "including those of property and free commerce, are to be subordinated to this principle." (Cf. CHAC Fact Sheet 4. Ethical Priorities, Social Policy Statement, available from CHAC, 1247 Wilborn Place, Ottawa K1H 6K9.

An alternative pluralism

In addition, I suggest an *alternative* pluralism that is different from *individualistic* and *relativistic* notions of pluralism. It also differs from the *anti-pluralism* promoted by some Christians, churches and action groups who mistakenly contend that Canada has been or should be a "Christian" country. My short-hand definition of *alternative* pluralism is "the public recognition that different people(s) have different beliefs and have the legal right to live in different ways, without discrimination."

Mutual respect and responsibility

While working for CPJ and now volunteering for CACP, I view *mutual respect* as a way to justice, linking people and communities through bonds of equity and fairness. Likewise, we view *mutual responsibility* as a tie that binds, linking people and communities through deeds of compassion and solidarity. This is an effective way of countering the dominant ideology of individualism so evident in *laissez-faire* capitalism and consumerism.

I've also found CPJ's *Guidelines for Socio-Economic Responsibility* to be quite helpful during discussions and negotiations with federal and provincial politicians and their advisers when it comes to developing government policies and public programs that seek to do justice to the public-justice requirements of *citizenship* and *stewardship* in our Canadian society. Here they are:

- **Concern** for the needs of people and future generations;
- **Respectful** in the treatment of the environment;
- **Careful** in the use of resources;
- **Watchful** in the prevention of waste;
- **Frugal** in the consumption of energy;
- **Just** in the employment of workers;
- **Careful** in the use of technology;
- **Fair** in the setting of prices and fees;
- **Equitable** in the earning of profit and wages;
- and **Honest** in the promotion of sales and services.

As I understand the biblical meaning of stewardship and economic development, equitable economic growth could be described as the responsible, sustainable development of human gifts and natural resources that would meet legitimate human needs and contribute to the environmental and socio-economic well-being of all

See PEOPLE *page 6...*

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People of faith can make a difference in public life

... continued from page 5

people. The modern pursuit of unrestricted growth in the gross domestic product (limitless material expansion) in our already wealthy society is unsustainable and often causes chronic poverty, structural unemployment and environmental deterioration.

Guidelines not infallible

Of course, none of these definitions and guidelines are *infallible* — no human-made concepts, doctrines and values are. My own attempts seek to concretize the biblical meaning of public justice (not just us) and to express the political, social and economic significance of justice, mercy, compassion, love, faithfulness, freedom and responsibility.

Obviously, more needs to be said and done if we, *together*, are to be a more *living witness*, greater *public evidence,* of the faith and hope that live in our hearts and should be lived out in public ways.

As the apostle Paul writes to the people of God in Corinth and Canada: We are called and empowered to be "a letter from Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God" (see 2 Corinthians 3:3).

Gerald Vandezande is the former National Public Affairs Director of Citizens for Public Justice, and a volunteer spokesperson for the Campaign Against Child Poverty. Vandezande is the author of **Justice, Not Just Us: Faith perspectives and national priorities,** *available from the Public Justice Resource Centre, Suite 311, 229 College Street, Toronto M5T 1R4.*

Housing issues on front burner in leadership race

Flaherty recommends jail as "tough love" solution for homeless

Margaret Dinsdale

TORONTO — A conference held in Toronto on February 14 and 15 by Housing and Homelessness Networking Ontario (HHNO) underlined ongoing concerns regarding the plight of families and individuals caught in the affordable housing crisis and the growing numbers of homeless people in Ontario. Forty housing advocates representing coalitions and community-based organizations from across Ontario attended, including representatives from the Campaign Against Child Poverty (CACP) and religious groups such as the Anglican Diocese of Toronto.

CHRISTIAN COURIER FILES

Leadership hopeful Jim Flaherty

Worsening plight of desperate families

The representative of CACP, Gerald Vandezande, is disturbed by Ontario finance minister and Progressive Conservative leadership hopeful Jim Flaherty's recent comments that homeless people need "tough love" to get them off the street. Flaherty's proposal includes jailing homeless people if they refuse to accompany special police officers to shelters, mental-health centres and hospitals or to detoxification or crisis intervention centres. This plan is apparently based on New York City's system under former mayor Rudolph Guiliani to clean up the streets there, despite the fact that many of NYC's homeless merely moved to adjacent municipalities.

"I am daily troubled by the worsening plight of desperate families and their dependents," Vandezande said in an interview. "These vulnerable neighbors, especially the growing number of homeless, are increasingly becoming Canada's forgotten people. They are particularly being abandoned by the Ontario government and its finance minister, Jim Flaherty. He appears to be obsessed with giving still more tax cuts to wealthy voters and powerful corporations."

Vandezande points to commitments by some of the Progressive Conservative candidates as well as the current Canadian Alliance leadership race participants to further tax cuts and less government participation in social programs.

"These tax giveaways are at the expense of powerless people who should not be discriminated against but, instead, protected and helped by providing decent shelter and equitable income support," he said. "A friend asked me recently: In good conscience, can people of faith accept the tainted money of tax cuts?"

Dangerous shelters

"John" is a resident of Tent City in Toronto, a waterfront collection of tents, donated trailers and dwellings constructed of scrap lumber. Interviewed last year near his home, he claims that he would do anything not to stay at a shelter.

"Why would I want to go to one? You get head lice or disease. Your stuff gets stolen. And there's one place I will not ever go to because I don't want to get shot or stabbed."

A recent article in the *Toronto Star* noted that the city's homeless advisory committee asked the province's chief coroner to call an inquest into the deaths of two men who died of tuberculosis (TB) while living in the city's homeless shelter system. There were 14 diagnosed cases of TB in the shelter system last December. Councillor Jack Layton cites overcrowding in shelters and church Out of the Cold programs as a factor in the proliferation of diseases.

So, wouldn't jail be a better alternative to shelters?

"Justice is not spelled just-us" asserts Vandezande. "Our own demands for fiscal fairness should never be at the peril of fellow Canadians who daily struggle for survival. They are clearly entitled to our generous support and our government's humane treatment."

The following statement was issued by HHNO: There are already too many homeless people crowded into the province's jails. We oppose any plans that further criminalize poor and homeless people and force more into jails.... Continued over-incarceration and unnecessary short-term sentencing creates more homelessness and wastes money that should be spent on affordable housing, social programs, prevention programs and alternatives to incarcerations."

Fear of the end and the end of fear

Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman

Hamburgers, fries, and an apocalypse. It just doesn't sound right. Although there have been some movies dealing with the end of the world (*Armageddon, End of Days*), most of us, sitting at our workplace, typing into our well-ordered screens, don't think about THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT. So we feel fine, and keep investing in RRSPs, assuming it will all continue indefinitely at compounding interest.

I work closely with the IVCF group on our campus, and recently we hosted a "Church on Tap," a seeker-oriented service in the campus pub, which was oriented around the theme, "THE END IS NEAR." It's radical, freaky. In fact, I gave a seminar on the topic of cults just the other day, and one characteristic of cults is their persistent emphasis on the end of the world.

We're not a cult, but we believe that without an apocalypse, our lives become mundane and lose a broader horizon of significance. Death, Judgement, Fire, Re-creation are all deeply rich and fearful realities that keep us sharp in a world slumbering in complacent consumerism. Hamburgers, fries, and apocalypse.

The end *is* going to happen. Soon and pretty soon. I went to visit a student last week who can't walk to class right now. He was zooming down the Niagara escarpment on his bike when a truck (probably with a drunk driver) came across the road and directly at him. Imagine whizzing downhill at 40 km/h, and your path blocked by two giant headlights.

"I had two seconds to do something," he said. "I decided to jump the curb and hit the rocks."

The 'Uh-Oh moment'

Two seconds. I'm going to call this special time the "Uh-Oh Moment," that moment in time when you know you are about to make impact with an end and you say to yourself, "Uh-Oh." It's that brief slice of time when everything almost pauses, and you are overcome by a horror, an "apocalypse," which means the unveiling of your destiny. The End is Near, and you know it.

Says Eugene Peterson, "We had supposed that our lives were so utterly ordinary... yet crisis rips the veneer of cliché off everyday routines and reveals the side-by-side splendors and terrors of heaven and hell."

End-of-the-World talk is vital for our blessed survival. Not to use it like a televangelist — to proudly predict or to manipulate people to join a group, say a prayer, or send money to a special program — but to urge us to examine our lives and motivate us to change. An apocalypse is a moment of utter clarity.

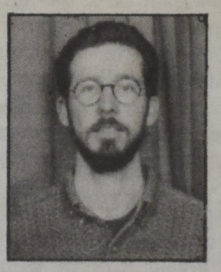
September 11 apocalypse

On September 11th, when those people aboard the jet planes figured it might be the End, do you remember what they did? Call their stockbroker? Fix their make-up? Hurriedly finish that last chapter?

Nope. They did two things: they called their loved ones to remind them of their love, and they prayed to God. Consciousness of the End should do that: get us to set our priorities straight, and get right with our neighbors and our Maker. Today. Not as a threat, but as an orientation.

"I come like a thief!" say the red letters in my Bible (Rev. 16:15). That is not a pleasant image at all. Imagine being in your bed, thinking you hear a noise downstairs. You assume it's the dog, but then the evidence mounts to the point where you cannot deny some dark figure is in your home. You have two seconds to act. Uh-oh...

The modern world is sad because there is nothing large on its horizon. Nothing ultimately large and ultimately significant. Fear of the End is a largeness if we recognize the End (or *purpose*) of Fear: to call you to passionate living — asking questions, taking risks, and trusting God, rather than mindlessly following the patterns of the dominant TV-show culture. Only then may you experience an End to Fear.



Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed campus chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

News

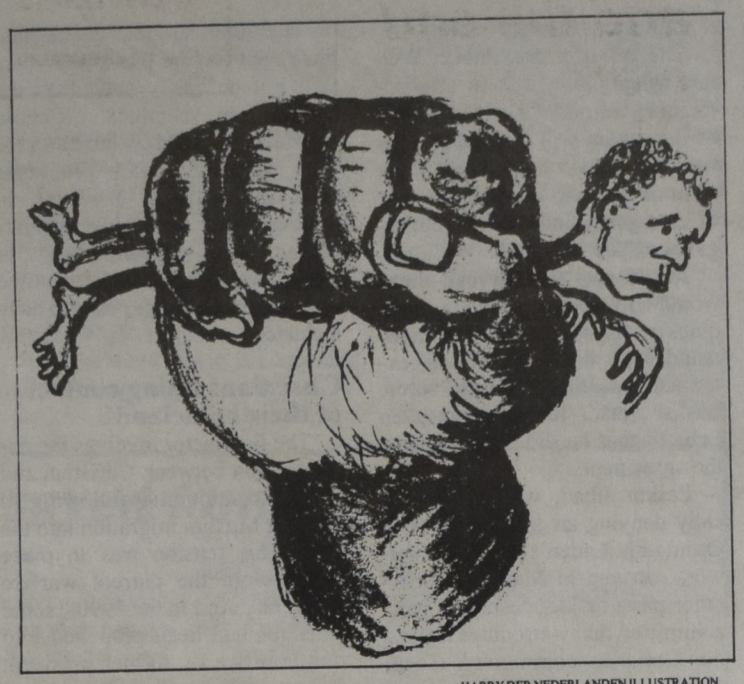
Mugabe defies international criticism and intimidates Zimbabwe voters

Harry der Nederlanden ***(With files from the Globe and Mail, the National Post, the New York Times, Compass and ENI)***

The elections in Zimbabwe are over and, at the writing of this article, the bloodbath that was feared did not happen. According to those who counted the ballots, Mugabe has been re-elected (if that's the right word for it) to his fourth term as president.

Some say that the elections were over before they began because of the intimidation, violence and manipulation of the process by Mugabe and his supporters in the weeks leading up to the election. In another sense, the elections are far from over, for they will be replayed, contested and reexamined, not just by Mugabe's opposition, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), but also by the press, by the leaders of the Commonwealth and by the international community.

Mugabe, now 78, has ruled Zimbabwe since independence, 22 years ago. He had actually reached the constitutional limits of his term (three consecutive terms) but had enough clout to get the law changed to permit him to run for another term. However, there was widespread dissatisfaction with his regime in the country, and many observers felt the rival MDC party, led by Morgan Tsvangirai, had a good chance of defeating Mugabe in a fair election.



HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN ILLUSTRATION

The clenched fist is the symbol for Mugabe's party.

Mobilizing militant followers

Then Mugabe began to stir things up, inciting his followers to seize large white-owned farms, promising to redistribute the land among poor veterans of the war for independence. Critics were quick to suggest that the move was politically motivated – to mobilize militant followers on his behalf. Gangs of toughs wearing Mugabe's ZANU-PF party colors have not only attacked numerous white farms but have also attacked blacks critical of Mugabe.

For months, opposition leaders and newspapers opposed to Mugabe's destructive policies have been subject to harassment, imprisonment, death threats and even murder. According to one report, over 100 MDC supporters have been killed during the campaign.

Election rallies for Mugabe were well attended, but not all the people were always there voluntarily. Mugabe's supporters have been acting like thugs, rounding up people and herding them to the rallies by threatening to beat them up. And they've shown that they are quite ready to use violence. Intimidation by the government-controlled media has been fierce, attacking and vilifying Mugabe's opponents, accusing them of treason and of selling Zimbabwe out to white colonialists. Whites in Zimbabwe have been accused of everything under the sun, including efforts to return the black population to slavery. One white spokesman compared their position to Jews in Germany under Hitler.

Not only the local press but also foreign journalists have been subject to vitriolic attacks, so that many people are afraid to talk to the press. One of the main opposition newspapers in the country has been fire-bombed twice.

Whites disenfranchised

In the week prior to the election, Mugabe used his presidential power to assert election rules that had been declared illegal by Zimbabwe's Supreme Court. These rules virtually disenfranchised most of the whites still left in Zimbabwe because many of them hold dual citizenship. Many thousands of blacks, too, were virtually disenfranchised; those who moved to the cities, for example, were required to vote where they were born. The cities constitute the main centres of support for Tsvangirai and the MDC.

On the eve of the election, the government made wholesale changes to voter lists, had not revealed the location of polling stations, and cut in half the number of polling stations in the cities and moved them to areas in the countryside where Mugabe is strong.

Police officers and soldiers reported that they had been told to vote in front of commanding officers or Mugabe agents. One said he had been told a vote against Mugabe was "suicidal".

Most of the observers from Europe and elsewhere who were to monitor the elections to assure fairness were ejected by the Mugabe government, so that only a minimal group of 40 from the Commonwealth were left to cover more than 4,000 polling stations. Dozens of opposition polling agents who were to supervise the ballot boxes were abducted or arrested and others were denied access to their stations.

Deliberately slowing the process

On the two days of the election, voters in the cities found themselves waiting for hours in huge line-ups caused by the shortage of polling stations. Apparently polling officials were deliberately slowing the process in places where support for the MDC was expected to be strong, so that many voters would not get a chance to vote before the polls closed. When the MDC protested, the courts ordered the polls to be opened an extra day. However, many stations opened only after many hours of delay, and in big cities like Harare many people never got to vote, even after waiting for two days. In some locations police dispersed the waiting crowds with tear gas and batons.

Church leaders have been on the forefront in calling an end to the intimidation and violence and for fair elections. In mid-February, 11 church leaders were arrested for holding a series of prayer meetings. Several have been threatened and forced into exile for daring to criticize the government. Representatives of 15 denominations met to condemn a law which restricted the freedom of churches and civic organizations to assemble other than for worship. The police invoked the new law to ban numerous rallies scheduled by the MDC, while Mugabe's party was able to hold its rallies without restriction.

The 15 representatives protested the harangues of the state controlled media which painted church leaders as stooges of foreign governments and institutions.

Commonwealth will decide on action

Representatives of the Commonwealth will now have to decide whether the elections were conducted fairly or whether there was widespread fraud. If the latter, the Commonwealth may call for economic sanctions against Zimbabwe. Some European countries have already put some sanctions in place, and Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain had pushed for such sanctions at the Commonwealth meeting held a week prior to the elections. Canada's Prime Minister Jean Chretien, however, opposed such a move and proposed the present plan in which a team comprised of South African President Thabo Mbeki, Australian Prime Minister John Howard and the Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo will make that judgment on behalf of the Commonwealth countries. African leaders have been stubbornly reluctant to take strong measures against dictatorial leaders in the past and have resisted Blair's urging to censure Mugabe.

Kare Vollan, head of the 25-member Norwegian team of monitors which was permitted to stay, said, "The presidential elections failed to meet key, broadly accepted criteria for elections."

Government officials, however, insisted they had done everything to see that the elections were fair. According to the *National Post*, the man in charge of elections, Mariyawanda Nzuwa, said, "We have done our best, and the majority of Zimbabweans have exercised their right to vote."

Zimbabwe used to be the breadbasket of Africa. Now Mugabe's policies, combined with a drought, have made large numbers dependent on food imports by relief agencies.

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Church

Christian-Muslim peace accord signed in Ambon, Indonesia

Alex Buchan

LONDON (Compass) — A second peace accord in the space of three months between Christians and Muslims in one of Indonesia's trouble spots got off to a rocky start in February.

Barely was the ink dry on an 11-point peace accord agreed on Feb. 12 between representatives of the Christian and Muslim communities in war-torn Ambon, when Jafar Umar Thalib, commander of Laskar Jihad extremists, said in a Feb. 14 press conference that he did not recognize the agreement.

Local Christian leaders warned that the agreement will only work with greater government determination to deal even-handedly with extremist groups dedicated to violence. More than 5,000 people have been killed and 250,000 have been left in refugee camps as a result of the violence that has erupted on Ambon and the surrounding Maluku islands since Dec. 1998. At one point, more than 700,000 people were displaced — one third of the entire population of the islands.

Seventy representatives from the Muslim and Christian communities of Ambon attended the two-day peace conference at the tourist resort of Malino, east of Makassar, capital of South Sulawesi province. This was also the scene of a similar agreement between Christians and Muslims in Central Sulawesi, signed Dec. 18. The new peace accord, known officially as "The Maluku Agreement," was moderated by the Indonesian government and contained at least five key affirmations:

- That each side would resolve to end all conflicts, including confiscating the weapons of extremist groups and banning all armed militias;
- That a national independent team should be established to probe the roots of the conflict;
- That all forced conversions to other religions should be rejected, and faith propagation be carried out in accordance with law in order to maintain harmonious relations between different religious communities;
- That all displaced people should now return to their place of origin;
- That security authorities should remain neutral in their efforts to maintain order and security.

An optimistic note

Participants sounded an optimistic note after the agreement. Roman Catholic Bishop Mandagi of Amboina Diocese told the press, "I am very hopeful that it will be adhered to. There is no alternative except peace to end the conflict."

Yet most reaction was more muted. Another participant, Protestant Synod Chairman Dr. Hendriks, confided that among the Christians there was still doubt about the ability of the government to implement the agreement.

The minister for Public Welfare, Jusuf Kalla, also at the conference, warned, "The restoration of the region will need about one year." He also confirmed there were no plans to lift the civil state of emergency imposed on the region on June 27, 2000.

Any doubts that the road ahead would be a difficult one were quickly dispelled when the commander of the 3,000-strong extremist Muslim fighting force, Laskar Jihad, told the press on Feb. 14 that he did not recognize the agreement.

Laskar Jihad, who are frantically denying an association with Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network, arrived in May 2000 from other parts of Indonesia and have committed many atrocities against the Christian community. These atrocities include killing, burning villages, and forcing Christians to convert to Islam by making them chose between circumcision and death. That their big and well-armed force remains at large throughout the islands only confirms Christian fears that the government armed forces are turning a blind eye to their presence.

The Malukus (formerly known as the Moluccas) consist of a huge archipelago of islands that contain the two provinces of Northern and Southern Maluku. Two million people live on the islands; roughly 50 per cent are Christian and 50 per cent are Muslim.

The inter-religious strife that has raged for the past three years will not be easily solved as the causes are complex. Richard Rowat, a past field co-ordinator for the Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders) in Ambon wrote a balanced analysis saying there were three kinds of factors involved which must be treated separately for peace to have a chance.

Christians losing control of their homeland

The first factor involves the rising tension between Christian and Muslim communities following 30 years of Muslim migration into the area. This tension was in place long before the current warfare broke out. And in the 1990s, some Muslims had been propelled into public office by former president Suharto, who was trying to curry favor with Muslim hardliners. The Christians felt they were beginning to lose control in their own homeland. Wrote Rowat, "As the more authoritarian rule of Jakarta slackened, people found they were able to vent their frustrations more openly. With a little help from religiously and politically venturesome people from outside the Malukus, the pot was brought to the boil, and in Dec. 1998, finally spilled over into open, violent conflict."

A second factor concerned local issues that fueled the conflict once it got underway. Rowat includes economic factors here. He writes, "... inflation and lack of money have caused a shift in employment patterns. Jobs traditionally held by the Muslim community (cycle drivers, porters) were infringed upon by Christians. Small business, traditionally a Christian activity, has seen a stronger Muslim participation. This has caused resentment on both sides."

Third, there are the external, or outside factors. Rowat does not mince his words here. "These include military, government officials and religious leaders. Their motivations cover a wide range, including trying to delay reforms on a national level, wanting to retain power at a local level in the face of a changing political environment, and long-term financial considerations relating to natural resources traditionally held by influential people, and religious aspirations."

Clearly, then, the problems in the Malukus will not be easily or swiftly solved. A pastor in Ambon City said, "The greatest thing we have going for us now is the exhaustion of the people — we are all fed up with the fighting. But the hardest thing will be learning to live side by side with Muslims and vice versa, because the conflict has completely segregated the two communities." He added, "If we stray into a Muslim community, we are killed. Simple as that! Healing will take a long time."

Christian schools closed in Nigeria's Kano state

Obed Minchakpu

KANO, Nigeria (Compass) — The Kano state government in northern Nigeria has closed 122 Christian schools, claiming the schools were operating illegally.

"The decision to close down the schools became necessary, considering the fact that the schools did not fulfill the necessary requirement set by the government," said Mohammed Tahir Adamu, special adviser to the Kano state governor on Islamic Affairs, at a press conference on Feb. 27 in Kano city.

Adamu said the closures were necessitated by the government's desire to ensure that only qualified teachers and standard educational materials were employed in educational institutions in the state. He denied accusations that the government is discriminating against Christians through its educational policies.

However, Rt. Rev. Zakka Nyam, Anglican Bishop of Kano, told Compass that the Christian school closures are part of the grand plan of Muslim politicians and their religious leaders to entrench Islam as state religion in Nigeria. "What they are doing is part of the Islamic legal system that has been adopted and is being implemented in northern Nigeria. They insist that Islamic religious knowledge must be made compulsory in Christian schools. How can this be?" Nyam asked.

"The government also says we must employ Islamic clerics to indoctrinate our children, and when we say no, they close down our schools and then claim that we have not met their educational standards," Nyam said. "What kind of policies are these? Should we just embrace anti-Christian educational policies that are detrimental to our faith? No, this can not happen," he stressed.

Kano state has become a hotbed of Islamic fundamentalism in Nigeria. Most of the religious conflicts in Nigeria usually emanate from Kano before spreading to other parts of the country.

Police chief accuses Muslims

Meanwhile, authorities of the Kano State Police Command have accused Muslim fundamentalists and their leaders of attacking Christians and raiding their homes in the state.

Yakubu Uba, a Muslim and the Kano state police commissioner, made the accusations at a press conference in Kano Feb. 14. He accused the fundamentalist state Islamic committee of allowing attacks on Christians and other non-Muslims while claiming they were enforcing "sharia," or Islamic law.

"We have observed with growing concern the activities of the so-called Independent Hisbah. This group has arrogated to itself the power to break into matrimonial homes to conduct searches, to loot, beat up people, and carry out other acts of violence against the people on frivolous charges," the police commissioner said.

He added that some of the members of the Islamic group were arrested for theft and that others were arrested for abducting Christian women from their homes and raping them.

Uba also disclosed that in Oct. 2001, more than 250 Hisbah members were arrested for involvement in rioting, killing Christians and destroying property in Kano city. He said the attacks on Christians were led by the Hisbah group, which claimed it was protesting the war against Al-Qaeda terrorists in Afghanistan. He said the same group killed five more Christians last December.

Ado Mohammed, chairman of the Hisbah group, said they have the right to enforce sharia in the state and they would resist any attempt to curtail such rights.

"Our committee has been indecently assaulted by the remarks of the Kano state police commissioner," Mohammed said, adding that there is nothing wrong with the mode of operation of the Hisbah group in the state.

Mohammed told journalists at a Feb. 19 press conference that they are prepared for a confrontation with the police if prevented from enforcing Islamic law. He stressed that Islamic law is no respecter of persons or faiths — the provisions of Islamic law must regulate the lives of all, including Christians.

The Kano state government on Oct. 2, 2001, initiated the Hisbah group, and Hisbah committees were set up in all 44 local government areas of the state. Since then, they have recruited only Muslim members to police the towns and cities of the state in order to enforce the Islamic legal code.

According to church leaders, the Islamic legal system was introduced to create a platform through which Christians can be persecuted.

Church

Churches in southern Philippines label kidnapping 'an endemic evil'

Geoff Stamp

MINDANAO, Philippines (Compass) — Churches in the Philippines are divided in their response to the presence of U.S. troops in Mindanao, even while agreeing that something needs to be done to put an end to frequent kidnappings.

Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, speaking for the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) on January 28, welcomed U.S. Military assistance in attempting to "end the people's suffering." He said that nothing had stopped the "kidnapping orgy of the Abu Sayyaf."

Condemning U.S. troop presence

However, Bishop Elmer Bolocon, general secretary of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, issued a statement on January 30 condemning the presence of U.S. troops.

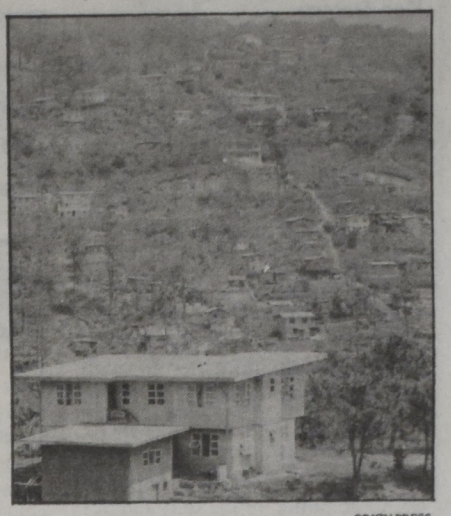
The United States is concerned that the group Abu Sayyaf — which is currently holding as hostages American missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham and a Filipino nurse — is connected to Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda organization. The U.S. has been monitoring more closely the situation in the Philippines since the events of last September 11. American troops have been sent to west Mindanao to help train members of the Philippine army in anti-terrorist methods.

Meanwhile, there were more kidnappings in December and January, and churches have voiced their concern against this "endemic evil."

Only for money

"People may be misled in thinking that these kidnappings are politically or religiously motivated," said Ramon Brotarlo, editor of several church newspapers in General Santos city on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao.

"These people do it for money, and that is all. They target tourists because they know the foreign governments will not abandon them. The others they think are rich enough to pay up. This practice has been going on here for years," Brotarlo said.



ORION PRESS

Homes on a hillside in Davao, in Mindanao.

The Pentagon group, like Abu Sayyaf, is a breakaway group from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which itself split from Nur Misuari's Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) following a peace agreement with the Aquino government and subsequent establishment of the autonomous Muslim region.

"MILF is more seriously Islamic in outlook, upholding 'sharia' — Islamic law — in its camps. The organization uses kidnappings to get more funds," Brotarlo explained. "It is true that many members of the MILF are well known here in Mindanao. But they have powerful allies in local government, in the armed forces, which is why they are not arrested."

Friends in high places

The MILF is not the only group with friends in high places. "In Zamboanga and Basilan, it is widely known that local authorities have assisted the Abu Sayyaf in avoiding the army's attempts to trap them and bring them to justice," said a former member of the New People's Army rebel group.

Like many other residents of Mindanao, he believes that the cause of Islam is a convenient front used to hide corruption and political manipulation. Some of the latest kidnappings are even believed to be the work of the police.

According to Brotarlo, the NPA and the MNLF want independence for Mindanao. The MILF wants an Islamic state based on the Koran. But the Abu Sayyaf and Pentagon groups are a law unto themselves.

"While there is speculation about an Al-Qaeda connection, what is sure is that the MILF camps have also been getting funds from Middle Eastern sources such as Saudi Arabia and Libya," Brotarlo asserted.

He added that the church did not see the terrorist groups targeting church leaders or Christians in particular.

"We have lived harmoniously here for many years. The bad feeling among the Maranow traders (Muslims) is mainly directed towards the Manila government. Where the church must tread warily, however, is in opposing the MILF and the various splinter groups that are seeking Muslim control of Mindanao and the establishment of Islamic law. Muslims are a minority here, no more than 40 per cent overall," he said.

Clergy are 'soft targets'

"Public opposition to the MILF could be interpreted as support for the government. The churches and the clergy are soft targets as demonstrated in Indonesia and in the kidnapping of priests in Mindanao. I don't think our problem is similar to the conflict in the Moluccas and in Central Sulawesi, but we cannot rule out an Islamic agenda for the Philippines."

Meanwhile, under interrogation in Indonesia, Islamic leader Ustad Abu Bakar Ba'asyir said that the largely Roman Catholic Philippines deserved to be a target for jihad.

"I advocate jihad because it is important in the Koran, but I make it clear to my students that it should only be done in places where Muslims are being victimized, like Afghanistan, Bosnia and southern Philippines," he said.

The 64-year-old Muslim teacher, who heads the Indonesian Mudjahadhin Council that campaigns for Islamic law in Indonesia, denies links with bin Laden but hails him as "a true Muslim fighter."

'Bobbie got saved tonight'

Lloyd Mackey

Bobbie was a 13-year-old boy living in a midwestern American town. He grew up to be a member of the United States House of Representatives.

In that capacity, he told the following story at one of the Presidential Prayer Breakfast events I attended earlier this month in Washington. I have shortened it and kept the identities vague enough to honor the off-the-record nature of these events.

Bobbie lived on the same street as six other 13-year-old neighbor boys. They were all part of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, where Father McGonigal was the priest.

That spring, one of the boys moved away. Another 13-year-old boy moved into the same house. His name was Greg and he was, of all things, a Baptist.

Bobbie's mother cautioned him. This new boy, she said, might be very nice, but be careful. Baptists recruit and they especially like to recruit Catholics.

All went well for about six months.

Prize for the most visitors

Then, one afternoon, Greg asked his six new friends if they would come with him to Pisgah Heights Baptist Church the next Wednesday evening. He would get a prize if he could bring more visitors than anyone else.

Their parents gave the boys permission to go with Greg — with the caution not to get recruited.

Off they went, in Greg's mom's station wagon. And up the stairs they ran, into Pisgah Heights Baptist Church. First stop was for punch and cookies. The boys found the Baptists to be very nice and they enjoyed the pleasant and slightly sanctified banter of the various people they met.

Then, into the sanctuary they trooped, for the Baptist Family Night meeting. Greg sat them right in the front row. He was so proud his buttons almost burst and he won the prize for bringing the most visitors.

The pastor had an interesting message. He ended it in good Baptist style, with an invitation for those who wanted to take a stand for Christ, to come forward to the front of the church.

The Baptists just sat on their hands. Nobody moved. The pastor repeated the invitation and still, there was nary a stir.

Bobbie was feeling badly for the pastor. He remembered that, just last week, Father McGonigal had told him, in confirmation class, that he should always, whenever the opportunity presented itself, take a stand for Christ.

So Bobbie went forward and stood with the pastor. And he was glad he did.

As Greg's mom drove the boys home in her station wagon, Greg told her that "Bobbie got saved tonight."

And, when Bobbie got home, he told his mom: "Greg says I got saved tonight."

Bobbie's mom was livid.

"I told you they would try to recruit you," she said, marching him out the front door and down the street to the house where Father McGonigal lived, next door to St. Joseph's.

When the priest answered the door, Bobbie's mom told him the Pisgah Heights story, ending it with the urgent request that he "turn Bobbie back into a Catholic."

Taking a stand for Christ

Father McGonigal paused a moment, then advised Bobbie's mom that he had told the boys, in confirmation class a few days before, that good Catholics should be willing to take a stand for Christ anytime, any place.

"Bobbie did what any good Catholic should. He will be okay. And, besides, it is 9:30. Go on home. It is time we all got some sleep."

Today, three decades later, Bobbie is Bob and he is still a Catholic. He loves his wife and three kids. And he meets every week with six other members of Congress. They gather to:

- Get to know Christ better.
- See what the Bible says about how they should live.
- Make sure they walk straight.
- Be accountable to each other and to God.
- Pray together.

His buddies are all Christians of several different stripes — and at several points along their faith pilgrimages.

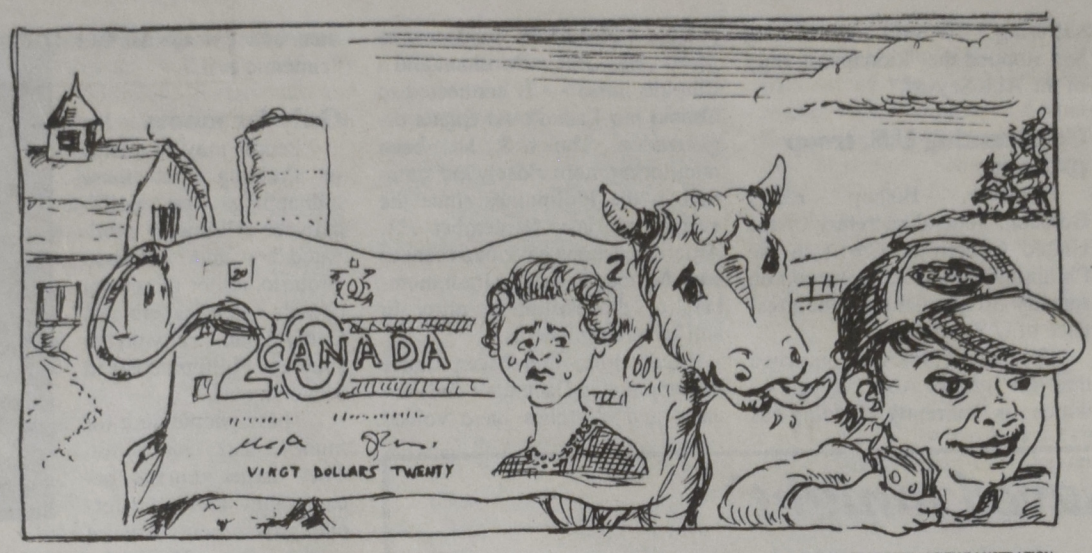
Politically, some are conservative Republicans, others are liberal Democrats. But their common faith in Christ helps them, by God's grace, to do politics Christianly.

Lloyd Mackey, a longtime observer of Canadian politics, writes a weekly column, "Doing politics Christianly" which is archived at christianity.ca. To subscribe write lmackey@attglobal.net

Investment

Cows and banks

Ron Deboer



HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN ILLUSTRATION

One of my best relationships was with a cow. Most people can remember their first boyfriend or their first childhood crush; I remember my first cow, given to me on my twelfth birthday, the day after my cow — then a calf — was born.

My job was to nurture this wet, wobbly animal to "cow-hood", my father placing me in charge of raising and disciplining her through her childhood and adolescent years. By the time I sold Fonzie — despite daily summer lessons from my 4-H Club handbook teaching her to be polite — the only talent I had taught her was how to jump up onto my shoulders and lick my ear. This was a clever trick when Fonzie was the size of a large dog but purely idiotic once the beast grew to weigh 1,200 pounds.

You could smell the burning fabric in my pockets. Money slipped through my fingers like wet boiled eggs. How things have changed today!

The day before I was forced to sell Fonzie, she had sneaked up behind my father and jumped up onto his shoulders, nearly crippling him. He jabbed Fonzie with a pitchfork, said something in Dutch, and decided Fonzie was ready for the auctioneer.

I would miss my cow. When I visited her in the barn the night before the auction, I told her so. When I watched her getting looked over by the farmers bidding on her, I felt a lump in my throat; when I saw her get loaded onto the truck and carried up the laneway to some distant farm, I nearly wept. When my father gave me the cheque for $1,118 from the auctioneer, I said, "Fonzie? Fonzie who?" Money in hand, I no longer saw Fonzie as having a personality; she was reduced to a commodity, an investment. So quickly had I let go of missing her I even laughed at the thought of some poor farmhand standing idly in the barn yard, Fonzie looking busy nearby, waiting for the poor sucker to turn his back.

Later that week, my father took me to the Chatsworth Bank of Montreal to open a savings account. The bank teller took my cheque, gave me a blue plastic bank book in which she had snapped a little piece of paper with the date, account number and dollar amount I had placed in the account. I was rich! I could buy anything I wanted! My mind was already leafing through the Canadian Tire catalogue.

"You'll leave it in there for a rainy day," my father said, speaking like a true Dutchman who had been born during the Depression, who had grown up during World War II and who had immigrated with many brothers and sisters and few suitcases. Since Chatsworth was a half-day bike ride from my farm, the money stayed in the bank. Every once in a while I was allowed to put some allowance in and receive a new page for my bank book.

Then I became a teenager.

When I hit high school, I learned the short term thrill and long term misery of the word "withdrawal". The indulgences of life were calling out to me — pinball machines, cigarettes and junk food — the staples of a 15-year-old boy. I watched my bank account slowly go south. I resolved over and over again, "Save it for a rainy day, save it for a rainy day."

Two rainy days later, my friend called to say he had tickets to an REO Speedwagon concert in Toronto. Cha-ching! went the cash register in my mind We, of course, would have to take a bus because neither of us had his license. Cha-ching, Cha-ching! Since the concert was part of a package, we also had to buy tickets to the Canadian National Exhibition, where we were enticed by games and roller coaster hucksters all day. Cha-ching, cha-ching, cha-ching!

By the time I arrived home, I didn't have two nickels to clink together. I was not your stereotypical Dutchman in those days. You know the joke about how the copper wire was invented — two Dutchmen fighting over a penny! You could smell the burning fabric in my pockets. Money slipped through my fingers like wet boiled eggs. How things have changed today!

My financial advisor loves to inform me that had I invested the thousand dollars Fonzie made me and placed the profits in an RRSP, I could retire in a few years. Ah, the sins of youth.

Today, we are inundated with bank commercials that offer us hope, life insurance ads that give us a reason to go on in life, and mutual fund ads that allow us to dream of days to come. The ads usually project us into some future where we see ourselves reclining on a yacht, sipping a piña colada on an island retreat, or driving a shiny new Lexus. Symbols of future success. We are urged to reward ourselves to the fullest for surviving a life of work. To indulge ourselves. To store away our money and then fulfill our dreams.

I remember a veteran teacher coming into my classroom early in my career and offering this sage advice as I erased blackboards of Shakespeare notes: "Be sure to maximize your RRSPs for life after this jungle," he growled.

Often, people are stressed about the future and whether or not they are investing properly to ensure happiness. Some people feel guilty spending money within a culture that says *invest, save, grow your money*.

Many more don't feel guilty enough. CBC reported recently that more than 50 per cent of working Canadians are a single paycheque away from being in major financial difficulty. That is, if they were not to get paid on a given Friday afternoon, they wouldn't be able to pay bills or sustain basic life necessities like groceries or a mortgage.

Statistics show that many Canadians carry debt on bank credit cards, store credit cards and personal lines of credit. With easy credit, we no longer think of "having money" as money sitting in our bank accounts, but as money that is available to us. Therefore, many Canadians buy items on credit, even though they already have debt. Some who have reached a ceiling on their credit believe they have money again once their credit has been increased or once their debt has been slightly decreased.

Imagine being an Israelite waiting each day for manna and then being instructed not to hide any extra for future consumption. If an Israelite gathered a little extra and hid it under a blanket in the back of her tent she would be demonstrating a lack of faith. Can you imagine fishermen dropping their nets and leaving behind all their earthly belongings to follow Jesus, trusting they would be provided for? God pledged he would take care of his people in the wilderness. Jesus said he would make his disciples fishers of men if they followed him. He didn't offer a high end salary or stocks in the company. Apparently, these same promises still exists today. But judging by our investment portfolios, you'd never know it.

Two weeks ago, I visited my bank with my four kids walking excitedly in tow. They were opening their first bank accounts. Of their weekly allowance and baby-sitting and snow shoveling earnings, half had gone into an envelope locked away in the desk of my study. Of the other half, they are encouraged to give half to charity (usually the collection plate) and the other half (a quarter of the whole) they may spend or save up for an earthly possession. To sweeten the pot and encourage a good work ethic, my wife, Karen, read somewhere that I should match what they put into the envelopes, so not only were they putting their own money into long term savings, but a healthy chunk of mine, too.

I explained to them the concept of interest — that the bank would pay them money to use their money. The 13-year-old liked that; the littluns, however, did not want their money to be used. They had formed a bond with the coins which they had regularly separated into piles on their bedspreads; they wanted their toonies and loonies placed in a special reserve of sorts in a big stainless steel vault somewhere in the basement of the bank. They were envisioning their money being placed in little sacks around which the top would be tied with a golden rope the likes of the vaults at Gringotts Bank in the Harry Potter novels. I requested the little sacks from Jennifer, our bank teller, who smiled and said, "Of *course*, what did you think we did with your money?"

I didn't tell the kids they couldn't take the money out until they were 18 and ready to begin their medical or law programs at various prestigious ivy-league universities. I didn't tell the older two their money had magically been rolled into an RESP, a registered education savings plan, on which the government would match 20 per cent of the contributions.

One of them asked the other day if she could take out her money and buy boxing gloves she had seen in the Sears catalogue. "That money's there for a rainy day," I said, echoing with a wise smile my father's words from a quarter century before.

"What the heck does that mean?" she said.

"I have no idea, but Mom says you can't touch your money."

"When I'm ready for school, I'm taking it all out and buying a PT Cruiser," she said with those squinty eyes she uses on me.

By then, of course, she'll be responsible for her own money and will it regard it much differently. I hope.

Unfortunately because she — like all of us — is a product of western culture, money will consume far too much of her adult thinking.

Poetry/Agriculture

Living Language Dead

my brother
excited pushes himself up with his fists
peering through the windowshield
I see Oma n'Opa's house
excited children
in our hidden world

the barn has chickens
they squawk and the feathers
thick with dust and hay
we pull carrots fat with dirt
eat with black faces
and in the pasture – rented out
I step in a cow pie
green-brown dye on white canvas shoes
disgusted city-girl oddly fascinated
later large lumpy beds
I sleep in the blue room
This one used to be Albert's – dad said
flashing shadows from a highway
zoom, flash and fade

house, barn, field
and – old man and wife
far off names
Don't kiss Opa, he has a scratchy face
Why would I kiss Opa?

And Oma
a shadow
a background glimmer
she knew you loved to eat pie – mom said
she loved to see you eat so well – mom said
she loved to sit with her children and
grandchildren around her – mom said

I tried to learn a poem once
to say to her
midn da frau es aul tigt snit
or something like that
I never did
I met my Oma only at her funeral
oh, she was still lying quiet
as quiet to me as she ever was in life
but when Uncle Archie told a story
of a woman who lived and fought
and suffered
a mother, a heroine
an alien, a pioneer
but she was already gone

I found my Oma at her funeral
found what I never knew before
only broken bridges held us
in a new land of swiftly flowing rivers
see, from her to me
a living language died

Elizabeth Stolte

A mentor unaware

COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE

My father, Stein Gleddie, died on Feb. 15, 2002. He was 95 years old. His life was marked by an emphasis on hard work amidst many hardships.

In 1910, at the age of three, Stein emigrated with his family to a homestead in semi-arid southeast Alberta. The CPR, anxious to increase freight traffic, attracted settlers by misrepresenting the area as arable. They disregarded warnings from ranchers who had already been there a decade and knew the harsh, dry climate would not support farming.

Dad's mother was ill and died from diphtheria only a month after arriving. Dad remembered nothing about his mother, perhaps because he, too, was gravely ill. He did remember playing with some stones he and his brothers found in the loose dirt on his mother's grave located near the house.

Difficult school life

School was a pain to Dad. Perhaps the highlight of his school years was killing a rattlesnake on the school grounds. The rattles are still in his safe. Every morning before school, he fetched the cows from pasture. On frosty fall mornings, he would stop to warm his bare feet on a spot where a cow had been lying. After milking there was a two-mile walk to school. It was difficult to stay awake in school. In Grade One he had to get past the embarrassment of speaking only Norwegian. Later on, it was the shame of failing grades and being older than the other pupils. At age 15 he was allowed to quit school.

Dad said that he did not reach his full height until he was well up into his teens. Likely he shot up as soon as he escaped the confinements of school and could do what he really wanted to do — be a rancher.

Blizzards, droughts and dangers

Dad was a natural stockman who could see that the 100 old ewes his father had bought to help eke out a living needed better care. (Sheep were promoted as requiring little feed and thus ideal for barren prairie). His father sold him five old ewes and turned over to him management of the flock. Through the early years there were many hardships. On 40-below mornings, as on any other day, hay had to be hauled to feed livestock. It was a 40-mile round trip by team and wagon to bring coal home from the mines on the riverbanks. There were runaways and unruly broncs. There were blizzards and droughts, grasshopper plagues, marauding coyotes, and badger holes that could topple a galloping horse, break its leg and the neck of the rider. Roaming bunches of horses stampeded through sheep flocks and long-horned stray cattle sheltered in the lee of the house on dark stormy nights. And always there were the long working days.

True to the ranchers' predictions, almost all of the settlers moved out, hundreds of them. I have stood on a ridge with Dad while he named off many who had lived in the valley below, the only thing remaining being a few cellars and a rusty old stove. The Gleddie family was one of the few surviving. Their flock grew to as many as 4,500 ewes herded over an area of 100 sq. mi., much of it abandoned homestead land.

Organizing and management was Dad's forte. He always had a number of men working for him, never asking them to do anything he would not do. With few exceptions, hired men stayed long with Dad. He continued friendships with many of them.

A major regret of my father's was that he did not spend more time with his family. He generally left the upbringing of the children to my mother. However, I do cherish times spent with Dad — always at work, mind you, behind him on the saddle or in the truck. From the age of 13, when I was deemed old enough to put in a full working day, I saw a lot more of my Dad and finally got to know him.

Relying on intuition, experience

Reading and also explaining or giving direction was difficult for Dad. He therefore relied almost entirely on what he heard, his intuition and experience — all of which he assimilated well and applied successfully. His approach was very much action-oriented. He did what he knew to be right. He tried for excellence in what he did. And he felt he was serving the Lord in that way. Dad would never put it this way, but to a significant extent when he was at work he was on holy ground. That is remarkable because it does not fit classic evangelical emphasis.

In recent years I have wondered why I have a somewhat different take on Christianity from that of many of those with whom I grew up in the church. Aside from theology picked up here and there along the way since I left home, I believe that much of the direction has come from Dad.

Home from Bible school one summer, I was pulled aside by Dad to tell me about the young man who saw clouds in the sky shaped like the letters "P" and "C". The young man took that as a sign that he was to "preach Christ". But, said Dad, it really meant, "plow corn". I think he was afraid I was going to go off the deep end too soon and become a preacher when there were other important things to consider as well.

I'm not sure Dad fully understood that he was showing by his life that all creation is important to the creator and remains so into eternity. Eternity runs from today on. It isn't all "pie in the sky by and by." It has been a tremendous boost to me to know that my daily work is ordained of God and of lasting value and I thank Dad for helping to get me that realization.

Dad was a builder and he built better than he knew.

COURTESY VERN GLEDDIE

Vern Gleddie surveys his sheep ranch.

Vern Gleddie has a sheep ranch near Edmonton, Alta.

Analysis

Interpreting Job

Bert Hielema

Job has fascinated me for a long time.

The common belief in Job's time was that being rich was a sign of piety. Satan believes that too. He thinks that as soon as Job loses his riches, he'll deny God. But Job disappoints him: "Naked I came, naked I'll leave. Praise God."

But Satan is stubborn. So back he goes to God for another visit and Job becomes ill. But the real pain starts when his friends come. When they see Job on a small hill, they stare at him for seven days without saying a word.

Job gets mad

Job is no fool. He knows what they are thinking — sin means shame— and as they sit there, Job, in his confusion, gets madder and madder. His mind revolves around the basic question: "God is doing this to me. No, he can't do this. Yes, he does." One thing he does know: his friends believe that God's favor means riches, his curse punishment. But Job, with all the power in his weakened body, denies this theory. It then dawns on Job that these three men are friends no more. Realizing this his mind snaps and he burst out: "God curse the day I was born."

That gives Eliphaz the clue to talk. Not a word of pity. Hammer blows: "Tell me whoever perished, being innocent?" This fellow knows exactly what God is thinking.

Then comes Bildad. Of the same stripe, only more so. He makes a snotty remark about how Job's kids are spoiled brats. He, too, has God in his pocket: "Listen, this is what God wants, because he never betrays the innocent." God is an open book for him. Not for Job. To Job God is THE mystery. A god we can understand is no god.

Who is right? Job honors a mysterious God. His companions revere a God about whom they know everything. Eliphaz bluntly tells Job in Chapter 15: "Job, you are undermining religion and crippling faith in God." Buddy Bildad dooms him to hell in Chapter 18: "Brimstone will be strewn on your household."

But Job stubbornly clings to his faith: in Chapter 19:25 he says: "I know that my Redeemer is alive and that in the end He will stand upon the earth." He will plead for me in God's court; he would stand up and vindicate my name.

Beautiful words

Beautiful words. Amazing words. Unbelievable what suffering can do to people. Satan has not counted on this sort of conversion.

"Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind": Engraving by William Blake.

He figured that Job's theology would be stagnant, a theology that teaches that religion is never for nothing.

In Chapter 28 Job's conversion continues. Once a real capitalist, in the good sense, he now confesses that this can hinder the development of wisdom. In his suffering, Job's conclusion is wonderful: "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to shun evil, that is understanding."

Then, after all these torrents of words, silence. "What next?" they all wonder.

Then the Lord speaks to Job out of a whirlwind. The Hidden One remains hidden, but not completely. God addresses himself to the one person who has asked constantly: "Why?" The curious thing is that the Lord's sayings all come as questions: "Where were you when I founded the earth? Who determined its measurements? Do you know the seasons of the mountain-goats?

It dawns on Job that his suffering, which he had made the central point of the universe, is nothing compared to God's greatness, to his over-arching wisdom.

While God hurls these questions at Job, a strange peace descends on him. He starts to realize that part of the secret of salvation is that God does things just for the sake of doing things. He now starts to see that all of life is a miracle; it needs neither a reason nor a cause; it needs no other ground than God's creative act, no other purpose than His own glorification, which also includes our salvation. Through his suffering, he discovers that in and above all other useful, moral, beautiful goals rises the one great given that God be known, be lived, be confessed, and believed as the only Godly being. His Essence is nothing else but to live and to give life. Period.

Humans not the only focal point

God's aim for humans is to have all people participate in his fullness. We humans are not the only focal point. We are not the totality of creation, although we often think so. John 3:16 explicitly says: God so loved the world, the cosmos, that he sent his son. In the world we ask for reasons, but when asked for a reason for the world, there is only one answer: the answer is that the pivot of life is God and God alone.

God wants Job to understand that his creative powers are infinite, infinite in beauty, infinite in design. God wants us to marvel at his ingenuity. He wants us to be astounded by the revival of nature in the spring, by the multitude of flowers which adorn the landscape, by the erratic flight of the swallows, the steaming heat of the summer, the almost plaintive sounds of autumn, the stark dignity of the winter landscape. He wants us to affirm with the Westminster Confession that our first duty in life is to enjoy God forever, and this pleasant duty starts with marveling at his creation.

When God is finished all Job can do is exclaim in utter surrender in Chapter 40: "How can I reply to you? I lay my hand on my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I cannot answer; even twice , but I can no more." His conversion is affirmed when he confesses in chapter 42:

"I heard of you with my ears; but now my eyes have seen you.

Therefore I will be quiet, comforted that I am dust."

Job did not find a solution for his questions, but he did find deliverance from his questions. We can never see God, but our great comfort is that God sees us. He sees us when we, like Job, come to him with questions: "Why did you do this, Lord? Why did that happen to me?" The meaning of the book of Job is not that we can solve the problem of our suffering in this life. No, the real meaning of the book is that we never arrive, that we never can say: we know enough. As long as we live we have to keep up our search for God, and we joyfully must accept this. As long as we live we must, relaxed and at ease, probe for his wisdom, a task which does not even end in eternity in the new earth.

Then in perfection, now through a glass darkly, we have the Word, Jesus Christ as our companion, we have him as our reliable Guide to direct us through the created Word, with the Scriptures as a lamp for our feet, always trying to ask the right questions so that we may find the right answers.

When we do this then God will also double our blessings. In that hope we live.

But there is more to Job than this.

Ideas about God must be probed, questioned

One of the basic thoughts of the book of Job is that we must not take generally accepted truths for granted but that the most basic ideas about God and religion have to be probed and questioned. The book of Job eases us into a revolutionary idea that we can argue with God against God, that this is our God-given duty. It reminds me of Jesus' approach to controversial issues: he too broached new and radical ideas in a subversive way, with the result that they often were only much later fully understood by his followers.

There is more to Job than his conversion. The book must also be seen as a parable. The writer of the book of Job — Dr. Wolfers thinks it is Isaiah — points to a new relationship between humans and God based not simply on obeying God's laws as outlined in the Torah, but on living an all-inclusive lifestyle, something we, 2,700 years later, have not yet grasped: the significance of the kingdom and its relation to the New Creation is still a mystery to most Christians.

Let me try to illustrate this. Not so long ago a person with a job could count on lifetime employment, especially in large companies, in the government, schools and hospitals. We now know that lifetime employment is out and contract employment is in. This means continuous updating, going back to school and taking courses. Persons who don't do this remain stuck at the bottom.

This state of mind, be it more relaxed and low-key and filled with a spirit-driven desire, also must motivate the believer. Just as manual typewriters and other old-fashioned tools are out, so also we no longer rely on the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) or the Canons of Dordt (1648). The principles have not changed: both a manual typewriter and a new computer have similar keyboards, but there the comparison stops. Many things my parents believed in their time, no longer apply: such as the place of women in church and society, the emphasis on going to church twice and the strict Sabbath observance.

Even in my life I can name

several things on which I have changed my mind radically: the entire idea of heaven for believers I have come to reject and for me Creation has become a matter of great importance. Also I now have new thoughts on the age of the universe and on certain aspects of evolution and creation, and I am sure that I will keep changing my opinions as I grow older.

Radical new thinking

When God speaks to Job, he opens Job's mind to some radical new thinking. This encourages me to prod myself and to probe and search what God wants me to do. The book tells me that we are never able to rest on past achievements, that there simply is no retirement for Christians ever. Seen in that light, the Book of Job is a perfect book for today.

Here are some clues:

• Already the word "the land of Uz" gives an indication of this new meaning. Dr David Wolfers, the author of *Deep Things out of Darkness* translates the word "Uz", as "the Land of Council." He thinks that the book asks us to look at the Bible with a critical eye and weigh its ideas carefully. In other words, we, as the Body of Christ locally, must come together and discuss, probe, investigate and discover what the gospel means for us. No longer are matters clear-cut: we have changed, circumstances have changed, the world has changed.

• He sees the disasters which befall Job, the loss of family, possessions, his sickness and even the visit of his friends, as signifying foreign invasion, destruction and the uprooting of the population, not only of the Jewish nation but also its old legalistic way of worship. I also think that these calamities foreshadow the disasters outlined in Revelation, of which such signs as dreadful diseases, overpopulation, global warming and floods, are just the preludes.

• And then there are the four friends. They may stand for three or four ethnic minorities within the Jewish nation, with their different types of worship, all centring on a faulty view of God. Transposing the scene to the religious world-wide spectrum today, I think the three friends, later joined by a fourth, could, in our world represent the three major orthodox religions: Judaism, based on the Old Testament only; hierarchical Roman Catholicism — insisting on papal infallibity and male dominance; and Islam; later joined by conservative orthodox Protestantism, the so-called Christian Right, all based on the false doctrine of either good works or a stagnant view of God.

"When the Morning Stars Sand together: Engraving by William Blake.

Although Job replies to the first three speakers, he wisely does not enter into dialogue with the last, the orthodox Christian Right, which, he thinks correctly, is a waste of breath.

Most liberating element

The most liberating element about this book is that here is a man who is not a good and patient and pious God-fearer, but a person who fights with God with all possible passion. Here is a man whom Jesus had in mind when he says, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, [who are willing to die for that ideal] for they shall be filled." Job is such a blessed person.

Job is suffering because God wants to teach Job something. God wants to teach Job that he must let go of some of the ideas he has about God, taught by previous generations, true for them in their time, perhaps, but not true for Job now.

For Job, only when God has personally spoken to him, only then does he understand for the first time in his life — and his suffering is the turning point — that God is different than he first imagined. He expresses this when he says : "I have heard of you with my ears, but now my eyes have seen you." Job's idea of God was based on the oral traditions. But now something different is forming in his mind, some new thoughts, some new ideas. His mind's eye is seeing a new God and also, looking inward, is seeing a new Job.

And what is it that Job starts to see?

Central point of the book

Here we come to the central point of the book, which makes it one of the most profound sources of contemporary spirituality. The accusing angel (Satan) believed that Job was only obedient to God because God had made him rich and prosperous, and so Satan thinks that Job will curse God if his blessings are taken away. However, there Satan miscalculated. True, Job was initially very much concerned about himself and his family. He figured that because he was so rich and so blessed with possessions, he was the centre of the universe.

Job's sin, and our sin, is anthropocentrism, the arrogant and deluded belief that the earth and the universe were designed for our benefit and control. When God talks to Job, he says, "Job, I've got a few questions for you. Where were you when I planned the earth? Tell me if you are so wise. Were you there when I stopped the waters as they issued gushing from the womb?"

Verse after verse, the voice in the whirlwind rages on, outlining all the interdependent elements of creation — the winds, clouds, thunderstorms, the lightning, lions, antelopes, oxen, ostriches, horses, hawks, vultures, bulls, serpents. The voice lashes out at Job's and our narrow self-centredness, admonishing him that he can never understand the complexity and the functioning of the planet and cosmos. "Have you been to the edge of the universe? Speak up, if you have such knowledge." A remark very applicable today when the Hubble spacecraft probes ever deeper into the universe and the pictures become ever more baffling.

Bow down and be humble

What we see here is the very opposite of a universe built for us to manipulate as we will. Instead of being given dominion over plants and animals, or a license to subdue creation, Job is told — and we with him — to bow down and be humble. He and we are required to stand before the face of God in absolute humility, and thus Job says in the end:

"I have heard of you with my ears [heard the Torah, heard hundreds of sermons] but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I will be quiet, comforted that I am dust." The Hebrew word for 'dust' here is exactly the same word used in Genesis 2, out of which God fashioned Adam, whose name actually means 'dust.' So the rebirth of Job is akin to becoming Adam. He is the prototype of the New Humanity. As a parable, Job represents the New Adam, the New Humanity, which is fully at ease being human, being of the earth. Dust we are, Adam we are, and to dust, to Adam — the New Adam — we shall return.

Job's ultimate surrender is not the sort of mindless obedience often required by dead orthodoxy. It is the kind of surrender that is the whole-hearted giving of oneself. A surrender to God's creation, his Universe, arising from a humility that leads to wisdom instead of self-centred pride. Job is born again, converted from an ego-centred person to an eco-centred consciousness based on awe for God and his great creation. That is the basic message of the book of Job. We are not here to maximize personal consumption and to glorify individual greed, the basic message of the gods of our age. As Christians, we must, following Job, progress from being ego-centred to eco-centred.

We know what happened to Job. The story is well known how he received double his capital as well as his family back.

Women get special attention

The most curious detail in the epilogue is the mention of Job's daughters. In this new world, the new creation in which Job now lives and which we will inherit, they are not inferior to the brothers and do not have to go to their houses for the annual celebration. Indeed, they are given the same honor by receiving a share of Job's wealth as their inheritance. Each is named, while the seven sons of Job remain anonymous. The names themselves — Dove, Cinnamon and Eye-shadow — symbolize peace, abundance and a specifically female kind of grace. The story's centre of gravity has shifted from righteousness to beauty and the focus is now the manifestation of inner peace.

"And in all the world there were no women as beautiful as Job's daughters."

There is something enormously satisfying about the prominence of women at the end of Job. Here they are especially included. The lesson here is that Job, and in him all God's people, has learned to surrender not only his erroneous ideas about God but also his male compulsion to control. The daughters almost have the last word. I think that even though now women are still secondary in many cultures, especially in religious institutions, in the new creation they will be more than equal.

And in all the world there were no women as beautiful as Job's daughters. What this parable also tells me is that in the New Creation there will be great appreciation for beauty, including female beauty. Let me end on that note. Thanks be to God.

Note: The views expressed in this article are those of Bert Hielema and are not necessarily shared by the staff of *Christian Courier*.

Mentoring

Walking with them in the Way: mentoring the new Christian

Janice Thompson

"Somebody is waiting on the other side of your obedience."
Tim Storey

Her name was Keli. She had a past. For all that I knew, she had never been through the doors of a church in her life. But here she sat — in the pew next to me — giving her heart to the Lord.

I had invited her to attend the service, not out of obligation, but because her daughter had shown an interest in spiritual things. Her little girl was best friends with my youngest daughter, and was very open to the things of God. Keli and I were friends, sure — but not the sort that hung out at church together. We were more of the "see you at the next soccer game" sort of friends. Our daughters played together and enjoyed each other's company.

'What do I do now?'

I was thrilled that her daughter, Tori, wanted to come to church, but wasn't exactly sure how I felt about Keli coming along too. It wasn't that I had negative feelings about it. Not at all. It's just that I hadn't really planned for it. And yet, here she sat, responding to the Pastor's invitation, and all I could think was, "What do I do now?"

I must admit, I was tempted to just "get her saved" and then drive her back home, hoping that the rest would work out for the best. Surely God had something else, or *someone* else, in mind to walk this road with Keli. After all, I had a large family to tend to, and she was, well... she was a real piece of work. I already had my hands full. There wasn't room in my life for this sort of complication.

Wrong. My obligation to Keli began the moment I walked her through the doors of the church, and wouldn't end until we parted some years later. Once she came to the saving knowledge of Christ, my work was just beginning. I didn't understand it then, but I certainly do now, and count it such a privilege!

A personal obligation

Mentoring a new Christian is more than just a 'good thing to do.' It's what we are called by God to do. When we play a role in leading others to Christ, we have a personal obligation to walk alongside them as they begin their new journey. There are so many things that they simply don't know, don't yet understand. They truly need guidance and teaching.

In Keli's case, she needed a lot of reassurance that her prior life was forgiven and cleansed by the blood of Jesus. She needed to know that she was accepted by Christ, and by fellow believers. She also needed to recognize that she must begin to resist the temptation to go back to her old ways. That was the part that made me a little nervous.

NEWS CANADA

Let the new convert know that you are praying for them regularly, and that you believe God has great things in store for them.

Starting our mentoring journey

My husband and I started our mentoring journey by making sure Keli was given the opportunity to be in church as often as she could be. We knew that the teaching she would receive there would be priceless. We introduced her to people who were strong in the Lord, and did our best to make her feel like part of the family. When we were together outside of the church walls, I became much more vocal about my faith, and found myself really opening up to her. She was very receptive to all that was happening, and yet still continued to struggle in her personal life with some of the same old temptations she had struggled with before coming to know the Lord. I watched as she took baby steps, and then began walking on her own.

As a family, we never gave up on Keli. We just kept plugging away, hoping that she would soon overcome those things. She and her daughter became permanent fixtures in our home, as much like family as anyone could be. Though our lives have since taken different paths, I will be forever grateful to the Lord for His willingness to use someone like me to help a new Christian in her walk with him. It was a wonderful experience that I will truly treasure. It was also an experience that taught me to be prepared and willing to be used again and again in this area.

Willing to be used by God

Remember that old saying, "Be careful what you pray for, because you just might get it?" I've always prayed that God would 'use me'. In my younger years, I never really thought much about *how* he would use me. I just wanted to make sure I was ready and willing. My experience with Keli answered the 'how' question. He wanted to use me to walk alongside new Christians. Now that I've come to that understanding, the only question that seems to be left is "Who?" Who will the Lord send my way today?

On any given day, you can find a host of kids in my home. I have four teenage daughters of my own, but they're not the ones I'm referring to. I seem to collect teens. They like to hang out at my house. Tall, short, skinny, chubby, outgoing, shy — you'll find them all, eating chips, drinking sodas, and generally having a grand time. That might annoy some people. It flatters me. Many of them are new converts, open and ready to receive. Others aren't quite there yet. Some are struggling with issues that are new to me, others are overcoming and moving forward. The fact that they think I might have something to offer them gets me really excited. It lets me know that God still trusts me enough to use me as a mentor.

Ways to mentor others

I like to spend time with them all, pouring into their lives in the most ordinary of ways. The stress of feeling like I have to do and say all of the right things has long since disappeared. Sharing a meal together, gabbing about issues they face — these are just a few of the 'spiritual ways' God has used me to mentor them. I'm learning that mentoring is simple: God just wants me to 'walk with them in the way.' That's all. He doesn't ask me to preach to them or to judge them. He doesn't require me to pass the wisdom of the ages along to them at every turn. He just wants me to give a kind word, a reassuring look. If I love them with the love of Christ, they will continue to come back and be fed.

"...Love covereth all sins." Proverbs 10:12

So, what exactly should a Christian do, if granted the opportunity to mentor a new Christian? Here are a few suggestions:

1. Pray for God's direction, for boldness and for vision. Just because he's used you in one particular way in the past doesn't mean it's going to be the same this time around. Different people require different approaches. Be prepared for God to use you in new and exciting ways.

2. Make sure you have a spiritual 'covering.' Have a spouse, pastor or a strong spiritual friend standing in the wings to assist you when you need assistance. You may often find yourself calling on them for help.

3. Go back and re-read all of those verses you clung to when you were a new Christian. Memorize as much of Romans as you can. Share the Scripture verses in easy-to-understand versions of the Bible.

On a learning curve

4. Be emotionally and spiritually prepared to stick with this person for the long haul, but don't take on more than you can handle. Remain committed to the relationship until God releases you from it. Don't allow yourself to be manipulated, but be willing to understand that they haven't got it all together yet. I've had to walk with new converts who praised God one minute and cursed the next — not because they didn't love God, but because they simply didn't have a full understanding yet. They were still on a learning curve. Ironically, so was I.

5.Expect and encourage change, but be patient as it comes about. Rome wasn't built in a day. People don't drop all of their old habits in a day, either. You are not the Holy Spirit. Only God can bring conviction. You just keep loving and encouraging them and let God be God.

6. Be prepared for the new convert to misunderstand or misapply Scripture passages. They will inevitably have serious questions and/or concerns about issues, and always seem to get around to the "Why do bad things happen to good people?" question. Study the Scriptures so that you are prepared to answer these questions without too much stumbling and fumbling when they are asked.

7. Be very careful not to speak negatively about your pastor, Sunday School teacher, or any other believer in front of the person you are mentoring, even when you feel you have a right to be frustrated or upset. This will plant ideas and opinions that you can never erase, and will create unnecessary confusion.

Generous with your home

8. Be generous and gracious with your home. You will often be required to "share your space" with people who need a shoulder, a conversation, a cup of coffee, etc. Make your home available. Make sure the others who live there are comfortable with that arrangement. Your own family should still come first, so be careful to strike a balance.

Continued on page 15...

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9. Let the new convert know that you are praying for them regularly, and that you believe God has great things in store for them.

Be real, be yourself

10. Don't be afraid of making mistakes in front of those you are mentoring. They will probably find you a lot more likeable if you don't hide all of your flaws from them. Be real. Be yourself. I love the words of Helen Keller, who said,

"To think clearly without hurry or confusion;

To love everybody sincerely;

To act in everything with the highest motives;

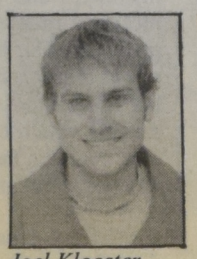
To trust God unhesitatingly."

Her words inspire me to love in word and in deed. They also force me to check my motives, and to trust that God knows what He is doing when He sends people into my path. He's not asking me to turn water into wine — to change them into something they are not. He simply wants me to walk with them in the Way.

Janice Thompson is a freelance writer who lives in Spring, Texas.

Calvin Athlete earns highest academic honor

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Calvin College senior Joel Klooster has been awarded a 2002 NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship. Klooster is one of 58 athletes awarded scholarships at the NCAA I, II and III levels in fall sports, which included men's and women's cross country, women's field hockey, football, women's volleyball, men's and women's soccer and men's water polo. The scholarships are one-time grants of $5,000 and are not renewable, reports Calvin College.



Joel Klooster

To qualify for an NCAA postgraduate scholarship, a student-athlete must have an overall grade-point average of 3.200 (on a 4.000 scale) or its equivalent and must have performed with distinction as a member of the varsity team in the sport in which the student-athlete was nominated.

The student-athlete must have behaved, both on and off the field, in a manner that has brought credit to the student-athlete, the institution and intercollegiate athletics. The student-athlete also must intend to continue academic work beyond the baccalaureate degree as a full-time or part-time graduate student.

Klooster hails from Chatham, Ontario and is a graduate of Chatham Christian High School. Over the past four years, Klooster has been a mainstay of the Calvin men's cross country team, helping the Knights to four consecutive MIAA and Great Lakes Regional titles as well as four consecutive top-four national finishes. As a junior in 2000, Klooster was a key member of a Calvin men's cross country team that captured its first-ever national championship as he earned All-America accolades with a 10th place individual finish. Klooster then received All-America honors for the second straight year this past fall as he took 24th at the NCAA III Championships, helping the Knights earn national runner-up honors. Klooster was also a member of Calvin's national runner-up squad in 1998 and Calvin's 1999 team that placed fourth in the U.S. A three-time All-MIAA 1st team selection in cross country, Klooster was named the MIAA's MVP in 1999. He also received All-MIAA 2nd team honors in cross country in 1998 and has been a member of the Great Lakes All-Region team in 1999, 2000 and 2001. In addition, he received All-MIAA honors in men's track and field in 2000 as he captured the league title in the 10,000 meters that spring. Later that spring, he took fourth in the 5,000 metres at the NCAA III Track and Field Championships.

An electrical engineering major with a minor in computer science, Klooster carries a 3.98 grade point average. He has been named a Verizon Academic All-American honors twice, receiving third team honors in cross country in 2000 and first team accolades in cross country in 2001. Klooster is a seven-time member of the Calvin Dean's List, a three-time member of the MIAA Academic Honor Roll and a three-time recipient of the College Cross Country Coaches All-Academic award. While a student, Klooster has helped design computer labs across the Calvin campus and has also worked at Smith Industries Aerospace in Kentwood, Mich.

C'mon kids, can't you just play nice?

After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides

NHL PHOTO

Canada's gold medal-winning Olympic hockey team.

I'm back at work now. After getting some minor surgery done, I spent a week at home recovering. The fact that the Olympics were going on at the same time (he hastily adds) wasn't premeditated. Still, since I was smitten by a debilitating convalescence, I was able to catch a lot of the Games on TV.

Of course, I loved the whole gold medal/silver medal skating debacle. And I tore most of my stitches out when Canada won gold in hockey. But I came away with one powerfully distinct impression of what I saw during the 17-days of competition: Salt Lake City brought out the kid in many of the countries.

Yes, there were several very adult aspects to the Games — doping, security forces, computer crimes, corruption. The overwhelming feeling that was evoked, however, was one that any parent of pre-adolescent siblings can relate to: "Can't we all just play nice and get along?"

Sending 'e-bombs'

The United States' 34 medals were thought by some nations to have come at their expense — quite different from the enthusiasm and good will of the Summer Games in Sydney. The South Koreans left Salt Lake in a snit after Kim Dong Sung was disqualified in the men's 1,500 short-track speedskate and the gold medal given to Apolo Anton Ohno of the U.S. Korean supporters sent 16,000 "e-bombs" to the U.S. Olympic Committee — some threats, some viruses, and some just plain sour grapes. Italy's Fabio Carta had to put in his two bits about Ohno, saying, "We should use a rifle on him."

The behavior of the Russians bordered on surreal. Red-faced and sputtering Russian officials protested the outcome of everything from skiing to figure skating. They never let up on their conspiracy theory of Olympic officials fixing the results so that Canada would play the U.S. for gold in men's hockey. They also never thought twice about blaming the officials for having the gall to test one of their cross-country skiers for drugs. The subsequent evidence of doping and the stripping of her gold medal only made them more indignant.

The blaming, name-calling, and general ugliness that went on put a sour taste in a lot of mouths, particularly in those of the Americans who felt like party hosts who'd had their house trashed. Not that there wasn't some silliness from them as well, though I was very impressed at how they hosted the Olympics and how their athletes generally carried themselves with class and humility (defying the bad rap they often get).

Olympics bring out the child in people

I suppose it's understandable that an event like the Olympics will bring out the child in a lot of people. You have a range of nations from varying and conflicting political, ideological, and economic backgrounds competing for supremacy. That doesn't always bring out the best qualities. Think for a second about the sordid past between the U.S. and Russia. They've never exactly been drinking buddies, let alone pen pals. It's inevitable that jealousy, self-pity, and pompous arrogance will all show their faces when you put enough countries into the same sandbox and get them to compete.

The Olympics were still beautiful. God was gracious in allowing the magnificence of the human body to come through in exciting ways. Beyond the silliness and bickering, there was graceful, gutsy, nerve-wracking beauty happening as great athletes pushed their human limits. To me, that's the most fantastic thing about the Olympics. All the whiners in the world can't change the fact that the Games are about astounding athletic gifts from a loving Creator.

Tim Antonides teaches Grade 8 and is a basketball coach at Surrey Christian School in Surrey, B.C.

Opinion

Clearing clutter frees us in many ways

Lisa M. Petsche

I just spent an afternoon helping my daughter tidy her bedroom — which includes two sizable closets — paring down the amount of stuff she has and reorganizing the remainder. We were quite pleased with the results. I especially felt a sense of accomplishment because one of my New Year's resolutions was to decrease the clutter in our home.

When we moved into our house more than a decade ago, everything we owned was thoughtfully designated a space and there was plenty of room to spare. But as our family grew, possessions accumulated, life got busier and gradually, insidiously, clutter developed. Because by nature I'm an organized person (and continue to maintain order in my workplace office), the current household disarray is a significant source of distress for me.

A deluge of paper

What I find most challenging is all the paper that must be dealt with each week. There's the mail, with all its bills, financial statements, correspondence, catalogues, magazines, coupons, charitable appeals and other solicitations, and the deluge of flyers that arrive in bags and newspapers.

The situation has really gotten overwhelming, though, since my children entered school. Daily, each arrives home with a backpack full of papers — art work, homework, graded tests and assignments, classroom bulletins, school newsletters, notices, requests, permission slips, book club flyers — that get dumped on the kitchen table or countertop.

Organizationally challenged

Factor in the many furnishings, accessories, appliances, electronics, hobby supplies, sporting equipment, toys, books, clothing and other items our home contains, and it's no wonder that, like many parents, I find myself organizationally challenged.

I'm reminded of a thought-provoking PBS special, *Escape from Affluenza*, which aired on television several years ago. People in the documentary felt overwhelmed by the amount of stuff they owned, the time and energy it took to acquire, maintain and store it all. They admitted purchasing things they didn't need or even want, having bought into such cultural myths as "more is better" and "you deserve it." Often this resulted in mounting debt — a further source of stress.

Of course, the more stuff we have, the more likely we are to be disorganized and, consequently, lack focus and feel frustrated. (Think of that sinking feeling you get every time you pass those piles on the dining room table, family room couch or bedroom floor.)

Time to streamline

However, instead of interpreting clutter as a sign that we need to spend a small fortune on storage products, renovate our home or move to a bigger one in order to properly house all our possessions, we'd be wise to regard it as a not-so-subtle hint that it's time to streamline.

Why? Because not only is having a lot of stuff a considerable drain on our time and energy, it's also a spiritual drain, diverting our attention from important concerns.

In his book, *Keep-life-simple Therapy*, Linus Mundy states that the yearning for simplicity many of us feel nowadays is a spiritual longing. With simplicity comes a sense of order that inspires inner peace and harmony with our surroundings.

According to the ancient Chinese art of Feng Shui, every object possesses an energy field which positively or negatively affects the flow of energy in our environment. Dirt and clutter are associated with negative energy; eliminating them, because it releases negative emotions, energizes us and makes way for new opportunities to come into our lives.

Possibilities might include greater intimacy with family or friends, a new relationship or more creative energy, says Cheryl Richardson, author of *Take Time for Your Life* and other self-help books. This is all part of living an "authentic life" — one that "honors your values and most treasured priorities." It's a matter of consciously directing our time and energy towards that which gives us genuine satisfaction and fulfilment, rather than allowing other people or the popular culture to determine meaning for us.

The paring-down process can be the beginning of an ongoing, simple living journey that awakens us to our innermost selves, creating wholeness and oneness with our surroundings as it centres us spiritually.

What better time than the Lenten season, therefore, to begin some early spring cleaning and de-cluttering? Not only is it a metaphor for the clearing out that's going on in our hearts and souls right now, but it can actually facilitate our conversion.

Lisa M. Petsche is a mother of three, mental health professional and freelance writer.

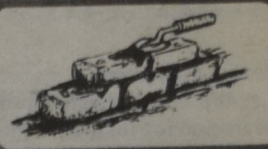
Warning Signs of Kidney Disease

- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- Puffiness of the eyes, hands and feet
- Passage of bloody, cloudy or tea-coloured urine
- Presence of protein in the urine
- Excessive foaming of the urine
- Frequent passing of urine during the night
- Passing less urine or difficulty passing urine
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite or weight
- Persistent generalized itching

- News Canada

Building Trust

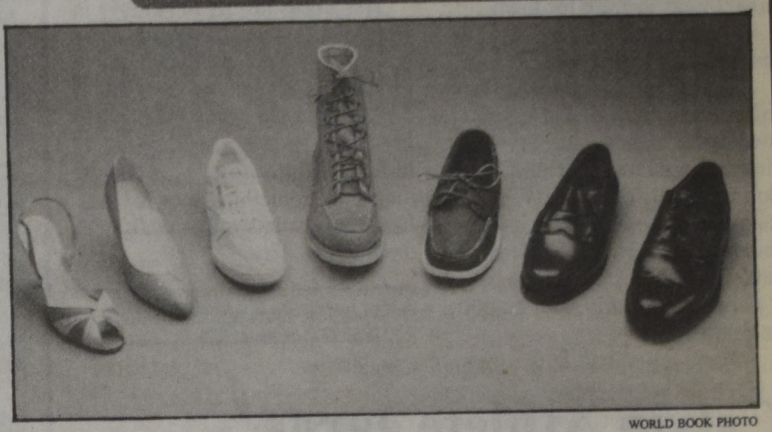
Vicky Van Andel Ed.



Beautiful feet

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

In her book, *The Way We Are*, Margaret Visser, author of such well-known books as *The Rituals of Dinner* and, more recently, *The Geometry of Love*, provides historical background and analysis of ordinary objects and behaviors. A chapter devoted to the history of high heels particularly caught my attention.



WORLD BOOK PHOTO

History of high heels

Visser relates that heels first appeared in the 1590s in France and were worn by men. She says, "...their first purpose was to raise their owners, enable them to pose impressively, and stretch their legs so that their calf muscles bulged curvaceously" (*The Way We Are*, p. 37). Obviously, I thought as I read her analysis, shoes say something about the people who wear them.

Visser adds, "High heels became distinctively female dress during the eighteenth century: men heartily approved. 'Heels' cause a woman's bottom to undulate twice as much as flat shoes permit; they pleasingly hobble the female and give the male a protective function; they add curve to the leg by shortening the heel cords and raising calf muscles. Slingback shoes and curving heels help draw attention to the back of a woman: it is the ancient device of rewarding the turning of the male's head" (p. 39).

So, I realized, not only did men's heels have a hidden agenda, the same was true for women's heels. However, as the book of Ecclesiastes tells us, there is a time for everything. And the same seems to be true of high heels. During traumatic times heels are set aside. Visser says, "Fashion historians tell us that women don strong shoes, low heels, and round toes whenever society feels threatened and politics uncertain. They are a sure sign that people — men as well as women — are worried, and gearing up for a fight" (pp. 40).

As I read Visser's comments, I realized that the shoe styles I've chosen to wear through the years have changed. What do my shoes say about me, I wondered? Why had I worn high heels? Why don't I wear them any more? The change was gradual, as most changes are, and in some way it was related to my growing freedom from people's expectations and to becoming comfortable with the person God created me to be.

In retrospect, I perceive that the gradual change started with a crisis. My mother was killed in a traffic accident in 1984 at the age of 54. I was 28 then, a mother of three young children, often struggling to understand my role as a mother, wife, member of the body of Christ, friend, citizen of my city, and emerging writer. After my mother's funeral, my sisters and I sorted, organized and distributed her belongings amongst ourselves and others. Because they fit me, I received her Birkenstocks, rather expensive German-made sandals which chiropractors recommend because they maintain the natural form of the foot and provide excellent arch support.

Comfort, health more important than fashion

I discovered I liked wearing them. They were good for my feet and my back, and they seemed to energize me as I walked. My feet never seemed to tire when I wore them. But I still wore high heels in certain settings even though they hurt my feet. After all, weren't they more feminine and attractive? But after enduring pinched toes and sore calf muscles, I realized bit-by-bit that I cared more about my comfort and the health of my body than I cared about fashion's edicts and how society expects a woman to dress.

As step-by-step I became more confident about dressing for comfort and well-being, imperceptibly I became more secure about actively defining my roles in life in the light of God's will for me, not in the light of what society expected of me. And I became more concerned about having beautiful feet in the way Isaiah describes: "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" (Isaiah 52:7).

You've been wearing shoes for years. What do the changing styles of your shoes reveal about your journey?

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema is a freelance writer who lives in St. Catharines, Ont.

News Comment

Nose for News

Bert Hielema

WHENEVER I HEAR THE word Kyoto, in my mind I spell it 'key-auto' because our treasured automobiles are the key to making this climate agreement possible. We know that the U.S.A. refuses to ratify this UN-sponsored treaty, calling it 'fatally flawed.'

President Bush in my presence (I was in the U.S. then) gave some smoke signals two weeks ago. Here is what he said, more or less, slightly paraphrased: "I fear that our blessed country will go up in smoke if we restrict the rise of Greenhouse Gases." Apparently he feels that the poisonous vapors from the exhausts of the 200 million cars and trucks there are not as deadly as the economic risk of cutting down on industrial production.

Basically, current thinking in Washington is that the best policy on Climate Change is to go slow, stop once in a while to see how things are up there in the air, and if and when science gives 100 per cent certainty that indeed the weather is getting hotter, start ever so slowly to cut down on energy uses so as not to hinder economic growth, which must proceed at all costs, even, as Ralph Klein suggested, at the cost of our breath. It seems that both Bush and Klein would rather be dead than look ahead, as leaders should. Both feel that North America must at all times make sure that others, like Europe, take the economic hits while they stay the course of economic growth.

OF COURSE, THE EUROPEAN countries are furious with the U.S.A. for being the largest contributor to man-made emissions, and they keep on branding Bush as the "Toxic Texan" and soon will call Ralph "Killer Klein." In order to cut down on greenhouse gases, secular Europe wants to impose a carbon tax to discourage their abuse, something which can be implemented with little red tape. But the word "tax" in the States is the worst word in its vocabulary, worse than rape or murder, it seems. It stands on par with abortion in the language of the administration there.

And that reminds me of the Canadian official opposition, the Alliance Party.

FLYING BACK FROM Minneapolis, the stewardess gave me a *Globe and Mail*. There I read that somebody had calculated that if Canada would implement the Kyoto treaty, we would lose 450,000 jobs in the next eight years. Frankly, I find it fascinating how people can do this, looking ahead almost a decade. I presume some guy, as opinionated as I sometimes am, grabbed a number out of the polluted air and stated it as the god-given truth.

I immediately made a mental leap to Enron, which projected its profits to be in the billions when in fact it lost that much. Nevertheless, the Alliance spokesman in the Commons blasted these figures to the government benches, in particular to David Anderson, the Minister of the Environment, demanding that Canada follow the lead of the U.S.A. and renege on ratifying the Climate Change Protocol, known as Kyoto. Mr. Anderson, by the way, now has a chauffeur-driven Prius, the Toyota hybrid that gets about 70 miles to a gallon (25 km per litre). None of the other ministers do.

Here is something that baffles me. If there is a Christian party in Ottawa's Parliament, it is the Canadian Alliance: Mr. Day, a Pentecostal preacher; its former-former leader, Preston Manning, a churchgoing man, son of a well-known politician-clergyman; many of its members quick to show their faith commitment and in particular their allegiance to fight abortion. Well and good. I appreciate that.

HOWEVER, IT IS A proven fact that dirty air kills, kills alive and kicking — and even born-again — human beings. Kyoto is all about containing pollution, minimizing the threats to life, not only the prevention of respiratory diseases, such as asthma — which, incidently, has increased by 25 per cent among children in the last decade — but also the increase of weather-related disasters, floods, droughts, hurricanes, which causes the death of millions. Yet, this mainly Christian party, with anti-abortion policy practically printed in its constitution, espouses measures that will cause the premature demise of an untold number of people, based on some very dubious job statistics.

To me, the essence of Christianity is John 3:16: "God so loved the World". The Greek word there for world is "cosmos," which, in contrast to chaos, means the well-ordered whole, a world without pollution, without poverty, and without pain. Kyoto's approval is but a very small step in expressing our love for that world. Somehow, godless Europe is closer to loving the world than 'religious' North America. Isn't that a curious indictment?

ALL THE SAME, THE world is a battlefield, in more respects than one. Although there is only one officially declared war, the war on Terrorism, in which Canada is an active participant, there are a great number of conflicts afoot everywhere. South America has Colombia and its 30-year civil war. In Europe, Chechnya still suffers from fighting. Bosnia, Kosovo, and Albania are never far from violence. Ireland now seems to have calmed down, but nothing there is certain. Israel and the Palestinians are daily in the news.

Then there is the religious strife in Sudan, Nigeria, and in Indonesia between Christians and Muslims. Islamic oppression in Lebanon and Syria where Christians continue to flee. Insurrections in Nepal and the Philippines, and soon, perhaps, in Zimbabwe. In India Hindu worshipers and Islam supporters have been killed by the hundreds.

These are the more obvious outbreaks of violence. According to Dr. Thomans Homer-Dixon, of the University of Toronto, all this global havoc has one common cause: environmental degradation.

It has long been my conviction that a hidden war is being waged, in which we all are participants: the war of us against the environment, the Economist versus the Environmentalist. The Economist tells us that in spite of two centuries of doomsaying, humanity is enjoying unprecedented prosperity.

"Sure," says the economist, "there are some problems, but technology will solve them. Look, even though the population has doubled in the past 40 years, cereal production has risen even more, from 275 to 370 kilos per person. Forests are regenerating and now more than 20 per cent of the industrial wood fiber comes from tree plantations. Human ingenuity and human genius have transformed the environment to the benefit of human life."

And then there is the Environmentalist, who admits that the human condition has improved and agrees that we have been able to create an economy-driven paradise. "But," says the environmentalist, "for every person in the world to reach our levels of consumption we would require four more planet Earths. A world that levels its forests, drains its aquifers, washes its topsoil downriver without measuring these costs, is a world traveling blind."

"Economic Growth," says the economist, "is the key to happiness for all."

"But," says, the green person, "if global output, now at about $31 trillion, were to expand at a modest three per cent annually, by 2050 it would reach $138 trillion. There is only one little flaw in this figure. It is the environment crumbling beneath us. If fresh water and arable land continue to disappear at the present rate, the boom will go bust and the effort to enlarge productive land will wipe out the world's plants and animals."

WHO IS RIGHT? A recent study has estimated that we exceeded the Earth's capacity to afford us around 1978. Now in 2002 we really need 1.5 planet Earths to keep us. Back in 1978, population and earth were in balance. No longer. This means that the Earth, on which we all depend for air, water, arable soil, has lost the ability to repair the damage done. We are no longer living on the interest but on the capital.

THIS SILENT WAR, OF Economist versus the Environmentalist, is the real war of the 21st century. Each day we add 200,000 people to this world: a city the size of Kingston. Each week we add a Toronto-sized city to this world. The more people, the faster the growth. When I was born in 1928, there were less than two billion like me around. I have seen the world population triple in my lifetime. The estimate is that by 2050 the population might be as low as 7.3 billion and as high as 14.4 billion, for an average of 9.5 billion, still almost 50 per cent more than the present number. If everybody becomes a vegetarian — like my wife and I — the earth could possibly support 10 billion people, but this would leave little or nothing for the animals in the world, of which we have billions.

In some way or another, we are all participants in this silent war, where the Economists urge us to drive more, buy more, eat more, while the Environmentalists urge us to go green, go vegetarian, drive less, eat less, buy less, live smaller, use renewable energy, live within the means on Planet Earth.

I imagine that before too long we will call this century the Age of the Environment. Perhaps then we might do something.

Bert Hielema's next new vehicle will also be a Prius.

Food..? For Thought..??

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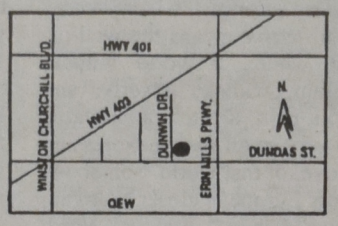

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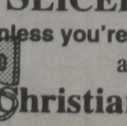

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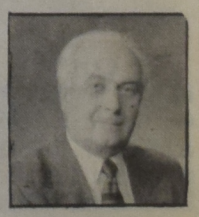
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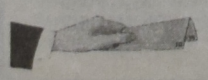

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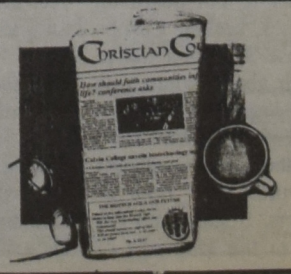

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Birthday/Anniversary

PETER AND ANTJE HAMMING
(nee Bakker)

On February 28th we celebrated our mother's 95th birthday, and on March 2nd, our parents' 64th wedding anniversary. We have been incredibly blessed by the lives and unending love given us by Mom and Dad and thank God that they still live each day fully.
Ko & Grace Hamming
Marenie & Warner Koiter
Tina & Gerry Kromhout
Anne & Cor Jongema
Wilma & John van Soelen
18 grandchildren and 18 great -grandchildren.
Home address: c/o Shalom Manor, 12 Bartlett Street #227, Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5

Personals

Christian lady, late 40s, interested in meeting a Christian gentleman. Reply to **File #2728, c/o 4 - 261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1**

Birthdays

Congratulations to Willemina Hoogendoorn on her 90th birthday

Westendorp, Gld — Brampton, Ont.
1912 — 2002

Willemina Hoogendoorn

hopes to celebrate her 90th birthday on March 29, 2002. Born in Gelderland, the Netherlands, she married Johan van Arragon in 1938.They had 11 children, two of them after immigrating to Canada in 1950. After Johan's death in 1980, Willemina married Hendrik Tempelman in 1981, then Dirk Hoogendoorn in 1987. Willemina is the mother of:
Ali & John Looyenga — Acton, Ont.
Jack van Arragon — Atikokan, Ont.
Anne van Arragon-Hutten — Kentville, N.S.
George & Freda van Arragon — St. Catharines, Ont.
Dolf & Joan van Arragon — Cambridge, Ont.
Willy van Arragon & Ellwood Harris — Acton, Ont.
Nelly & Clarence Jonkman — Georgetown, Ont.
Gertie & John Krale — Petrolia, Ont.
John & Ann van Arragon — Red Deer, Alta.
Margaret & Lavern Brubacher — Elmira, Ont.
Dirk van Arragon — Acton, Ont.
She also has 50 grandchildren & 46 great grandchildren.
Address: Mrs. W. Hoogendoorn, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S. Apt CT 1003 Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7

Anniversary

1952 — March 21 — 2002
Schoonoord, Drenthe, the Neth. — Woodstock, Ont.

With great joy and thankfulness to our God we wish to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of onze lieve

Oom HENK and Tante DIENI ROODE (nee Lamberts)

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless you. May we enjoy your company, fun, and laughter for many more years. We deeply treasure you both. With love from your nephews and nieces:
Ralph & Anne Koops — Cambridge, Ont.
Hazel & Andrew Siderius — Brampton, Ont.
Anne & Al Van der Ziel — Two Harbors, Minn.
Wilma & Clarence Sol — Kitchener, Ont.
Harry & Beth Koops — Grand Rapids, Mich.
and their children.
Home address: 154 Berwick St., Woodstock, Ont. N4S 7L5

Anniversaries

Brampton — Ancaster
1952 — April 6 — 2002

"O Lord my God, I will give You thanks forever" Psalm 30:12b

With thankfulness to our Lord for his love and faithfulness we announce the 50th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents:

HARM and ROELY DEVRIES
(nee Moesker)

We are very thankful for the wonderful parents you have been to all of us and we love you both dearly:
Bob & Trudy DeVries — Glen Williams, Ont.
Marvin & Peggy DeVries — Mount Bridges, Ont.
Harry & Mary DeVries — Ancaster, Ont.
Ed & Joyce VanVeenendaal — Ladner, B.C.
and 14 grandchildren

1952 — April 7 — 2002

With thankfulness to God, we celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents

FRED and HANNA GIETEMA
(nee Beukens)

With love,
Gertie & John Fictorie
Ann & Carl Van Harten
Helene & Ken Vanderveen
Sharon & Ed Vandenberg
Harvey & Brigitte Gietema
Evelyn & Eric Van Egmond
Ruby & Enno Meijers
Debbie & Ed Groot
and forty grandchildren.
We praise God for His faithfulness.
Home address: 1364 Bowman Rd, Abbotsford, BC, V3G 1T1

Congratulations to John and Maria Reinders on their 50th wedding anniversary

1952 — March 15 — 2002

"There are many who say, 'O though we might see some good!'
Lift up the light of Thy countenance upon us, O Lord'" Psalm 4:6:

With thanksgiving to God for health and happiness, we wish to announce the 50th Anniversary of our parents and grandparents

JOHN AND MARIA REINDERS
(nee Plugers)

We pray God will continue to be faithful and continue to bless
them with peace and joy in the future.
Much love from your children and grandchildren:
Grace & Mike Griswold
Michael, Maria
Richard Reinders
Glenn & Lynn Reinders
Darcy, Kyle, Chad, Alison
An open house is planned, God willing, on March 30, 2002 from 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. at Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, 577 Norwich Avenue, Woodstock, Ont.
Best wishes only, please.
Home address: 531 Nova Scotia Crt., Woodstock, ON N4S 8Z3

Joure — Friesland — Koudum
1952 — March 14 — 2002

"Ken Hem in al uwe wegen" Prov. 3:6a

With joy and thankfulness to the Lord we'd like to announce our 50th wedding anniversary on March 14, 2002

MARTIN & EVELYN DRYFHOUT
(nee de Vries)

Blessed with 5 children and 13 grandchildren.
Home Address: 111 9030 158 St., Surrey, BC V4N 5G4

Obituaries

June 14, 1934 — Feb. 17, 2002
Atwood, Ont. — Smithers, B.C.

"For you O Lord have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before the Lord in the land of the living." Psalm 116:8-9

In His grace the Lord took His servant

GLENN EWALD

home after a lengthy battle with cancer. He is lovingly remembered by his wife Thea Ewald (Westerterp) and his children:
Gwen & Bruce Nicolai
Ed & Brenda Ewald
Wendall and Judy Ewald
Mike & Kathleen Ewald
Ted & Jeanette Ewald
Roger & Tamara Ewald
He will also be greatly missed by 25 grandchildren. Predeceased by his first wife, Dini, and infant daughter, Elaine.
Funeral was held at Bethel United Reformed Church in Smithers with Rev. B. Beukema and Rev. P. Voosteen officiating.

May 6, 1920 — March 3, 2002
Assen, the Neth. — Barrie, Ont.

Called home by her Heavenly Father

JEAN EISSES

"But I trust in you O Lord, I say You. are my God. My times are in Your hands." Psalm 31:14-15a

Beloved wife of the late Albert Eisses.
Beloved mother of:
John & Alida Eisses — Innisfil, Ont.
Harry & Willy Eisses — innisfil, Ont.
Anne & Tony Gainsbrook — Innisfil, Ont.
Ed & Nellie Eisses — Innisfil, Ont.
Henry & Joan Eisses – Picture Butte, Alta.
Larry & Annamarie Eisses — Innisfil, Ont.
Carl & Teny Eisses – Innisfil, Ont.
Ron & Margaret Eisses — Barrie, Ont
Loving grandmother of 27 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. Also survived by sisters Hilly Hessels and Klaasje Hessels and the late Harm Hessels of the Netherlands. Funeral Service was held March 6, 2002 in First Barrie CRC.

Suddenly on Feb. 24, 2002, the Lord took unto himself our dear aunt and sister-in-law

CHRISTINA NOORDSTRA
(nee Klingenberg)

May the Lord comfort husband Al and children.
Fam. G. Talsma & Fam. A. Brouwer
Psalm 23:6

Call *Christian Courier* today to place your family ad: 1-800-969-4838.

Obituaries

While preparing for church on Sunday morning February 24, 2002, the Lord in His infinite wisdom called home

CHRISTIAN NOORDSTRA
(nee Klingenberg)

at the age of 64. She was the loving wife of Ale for 44 years and Mom to:
Chris & Joe
Gary & Tina
Thris
Judy & Ron
Proud Oma of Bryan, Kevin, Jarod. Doray, Cameron Mara and Jenna. Sister to Mans and Roelie, Anne, Grietje and Wim, Rika and John Ruth, Fenny and John, Jack and Alice, Gerrit and Trientje, Jane and Clarence and Harry and Andrea.
Predeceased by Berend and Aaltje, Gezinus, Berend and Jan and Dicky. Many brothers and sisters-in-law will also miss her both here and in the Netherlands.
The funeral took place on Wednesday February 27, 2002 at the Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church of Bowmanville. No, she did not make it to church that Sunday morning, but now she sees Him face to face and tells the story, saved by grace.

"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalm 23:6

Sept. 20, 1903 — Feb. 10, 2002
OosterNykerk Friesland, Neth. — Waterville N.S., Canada

"I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day." 2 Timothy 1:12

Peacefully, surrounded by her children, the Lord took home into eternal glory, our loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother

DOETJE (ELZINGA) VISSER

on Sunday, February 10, 2002 in her home in Waterville.
Predeceased by her husband William, on January 31, 1991.
Loving mother of:
Menno & Catherine Visser — Grafton, N.S.
Gerrit & Fim Visser — Orwell Cove, P.E.I.
Nico & Jannie Visser — Waterville, N.S.
Jacob & Gonda Visser — Orwell Cove P.E.I.
Leo & Alice Visser — Newmarket, Ont.
Anne & Gerrit Kamphuis — Hilden, N.S.
Dirk & Barbara Visser — Woodstock, Ont.
Gerry & Frank VanMeekeren — Lakeville, N.S.
Tina & Gerrit Hengeveld — Waterville, N.S.
Helen & Jacob Hartenhof — Coldbrook, N.S.
Frances & Mars Fam — Scarborough, Ont.
30 grandchildren and 61 great-grandchildren. Funeral service was held on Saturday, Feb. 16 at the Kentville CRC. Rev. Norman Visser and Evangelist Robert Visser (grandson) officiated.

For Rent

Furnished home for rent: May 8- June 17, 2002, in Niagara Peninsula. Phone: 905-562-7478
E-mail: dejonghs@mergetel.com

Classifieds

Obituary

Nov. 13, 1905 Feb. 24, 2002
John 14:1-4
On Sunday Feb. 24th, 2002 our dear wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother
HENDRIKJE STORTEBOOM
(nee Beumer)
went home to be with her Lord and Savior in her 97th year. Much loved wife of Herman Storteboom for almost 69 years. Loved and loving mother of:
Joan & Philip De Gans
Klaas & Alice Storteboom
Gertie & Hank Nyhof
Ralph & Vivian Storteboom
Dear Oma of 11 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren. Predeceased by grandson, Eric De Gans (2001).
A memorial service was held on Thursday, Feb. 28, 2002 at Holland Christian Homes, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S, Brampton. Rev. Herman Praamsma officiated.
Correspondence address:
Klaas Storteboom, Box 179,
Belgrave, ON N0G 1E0

Teachers

LISTOWEL, ONT.:
Listowel Christian School has a Junior division teaching position available Sept. 2002. Phys. Ed. background an asset. Contact :
Mr. G. Bierma
Listowel Christian School
Box 151
Listowel, ON N4W 3H2
Ph: 519-291-3086 or
E-mail: lcs@postmark.net

CHATHAM, ONT.:
Chatham Christian High School invites teachers, who demonstrate a passionate love for God and young people, to join our team. We are a growing school in a brand new facility, supported by a strong Christian community. We seek applications for **Vice-Principal**, as well as teachers with strengths in the following areas: **Math, Science, Business**, and **Special Education**. Please address your letter of application and resume to: **John Van Pelt**
Chatham Christian High School
475 Keil Dr. South,
Chatham, ON N7M 6L8
Phone: 519-352-4980
Fax: 519-352-4041
E-mail:
johnvanpelt@chathamchristian.ca

LANGLEY, B.C.:
Langley Christian High School has the following positions open for 2002-2003:
French 9 -12;
Learning Assistance/Special Education, 9 - 12;
English 9 - 10;
Drama, 9-12,
General Science, 9 - 10.
All applications must include a resume, statement of faith, and educational philosophy, university transcripts, and references.
Send to:
Peter Van Huizen, Principal
Langley Christian High School
22702 - 48 Ave.
Langley BC V2Z 2T6
Ph: 604-533-0839
Fax: 604-533-0842
E-mail: pvanhuizen@lcmhs.ca

Teachers

LACOMBE, ALTA.:
Lacombe Christian School, approximately 384 students in K - 9, located in sunny Central Alberta invites applications from qualified Christian teachers for a possible **Grade 1 - 6 Music/Junior High Band teacher, lower and upper elementary** teacher positions. Applicants must qualify for Alberta teacher certification. Please send resume to:
Martin Folkerts
Lacombe Christian School
5206 - 58 Street,
Lacombe, AB, T4L 1G9,
Ph: 403- 782-6531,
Fax: 403-782-5760
E-mail: office@lacs.ca

TRENTON, ONT.:
Trenton Christian School invites applications from qualified teachers for potential openings in the **junior** and **intermediate** areas effective September 2002. Strengths in Music or Science will be an asset. Please send letter of application, resumes, inquiries, etc., before April 4, 2002 to our campus at:
Ike Witterveen, Principal
Trenton Christian School
340 Second Dug Hill Rd., RR #4,
Trenton, ON KSV 5P7
Phone: 613-392-3600
Fax: 613-392-6316
E-mail: tcs@reach.net

Job Opportunity

West End CRC, Edmonton, is searching for a team-leading **Pastor of Preaching**. The pastor we are searching for to serve our 950-member congregation will do most of the preaching and will lead a ministry staff team that includes a youth pastor, an evangelist/director of congregational life, a pastor of visitation (pt), and a music director (pt). Pastoral care is shared between the lead pastor and the other team members. The pastor we are seeking will be able to lead and inspire us with an all-encompassing vision of service to God, to each other, and to the world. Please contact:
Alyce Oosterhuis
Phone: 780-483-8153
E-mail: aoosterh@kingsu.ab.ca.

Position Wanted

Young lady, 19 years old, seeking employment as a **Nanny** for a Dutch family in the Netherlands. Plans to pursue Early Childhood Education. Understands Dutch. **Start Aug./ Sept., 2002. 519-941-6155** evenings.

Roommate Wanted

I'm looking for a **male roommate** to move in on the first of April. I live 5 minutes from downtown **Hamilton**. If you would like to enquire further, please call Maarten at **905-521-9043** or e-mail **maartenv@ionsys.com**

House to share in **St. Catharines**. Ideal for students. On bus route and close to mall. Available Apr.1,2002. For more information, contact Anita at **905-937-3314** or e-mail: **imedcalf @sympatico.ca**

Job Opportunity

THE KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
Christian University Education

VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC

The King's University College in Edmonton, Alberta, is seeking to fill a vacancy in the position of Vice President Academic. In accordance with the Christian mission of the University College, the Vice President Academic will have primary responsibility for all academic affairs at King's by promoting and sustaining a Christian vision of academic life in the institution. Together with the Associate Vice President Academic and Chairs of Academic Divisions, he/she will preside over the review and development of academic programs and curriculum as well as the recruitment of new faculty. Also, the Vice President Academic provides official liaison with government and educational institutions in academic matters. In addition to providing leadership in academic affairs, the Vice President Academic also supervises the work of the Registrar and Director of Library Services.

The King's University College is a Christian liberal arts institution seeking to be faithful to God in fulfilling its mission of teaching and learning, research, and serving the community through a transforming engagement with our culture. Its mission is derived from the Christian Scriptures, the historic faith of the Christian church, and a Reformed understanding of the Christian's task in the world. King's offers three- and four-year Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees, a Bachelor of Commerce, a Bachelor of Music, and a two-year Bachelor of Education (after) degree. Its degree programs are accredited by the Government of Alberta, upon recommendation by Alberta's Private Colleges Accreditation Board. The University College is a member of the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada and of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. It is growing rapidly, with a current enrolment (2001-2002) of 564 students.

To be considered for appointment, a candidate must endorse the Mission Statement and the Statement of Faith of The King's University College, and demonstrate a clear understanding of their implications for academic life at the institution, as well as a willingness to enthusiastically engage the entire faculty in the process of working out these implications in teaching, research, and service to the community.

Qualifications:
- Significant experience in university-level teaching and research, preferably in a Christian higher education setting; doctorate or equivalent
- Strong commitment to Christian university education, and ability to provide leadership in this area
- Experience in academic administration and leadership
- Strong interpersonal and leadership skills

Application Deadline: June 30, 2002, or when filled
Starting Date: July 1, 2003
In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed first to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada. Applicants are to send applications with complete Curriculum Vitae in confidence to:

Dr. Henk W. H. Van Andel
President and Chair of the Search Committee
The King's University College
9125 50th Street
Edmonton, AB T6B 2H3, CANADA
www.kingsu.ab.ca

Church News

Classis Chatham will meet in regular session D.V. May 14, 2002 in the First Christian Reformed Church of London, Ontario. All materials for the Agenda must be in the office of the Stated Clerk by Monday, March 26, 2002.

Call Accepted
Rev. Fred Heslinga of Edmonton, Alberta (Ottewell CRC) accepted the call to be pastor of the Essex Christian Reformed Church of Essex, Ontario.

For Rent

Beachfront modern 3 bedroom cottage on **Lake Erie** at Turkey Point. Some weeks still available in June and July 2002. $750.00 week. Call 905-689-6392.

Teachers

SMITHVILLE, ONT.
Smithville District Christian High School invites applications for the following openings: **Technical Education**: Woodworking, Small engines, Computer; **Business, Music.** SDCH serves nearly 300 students and we are growing! Send all inquiries and applications to:
Smithville District Christian High
6488 Smithville Road,
Smithville, ON LOR 2A0
Phone: 905-957-3255
Fax: 905-957-3431
E-mail: sdoffice@sdch.on.ca

Send your school's Teacher ads by e-mail to: ccadpromo@aol.com or to fax #: 905-682-8313

Miscellaneous

The Living Word
Sermons for reading services.
Contact:
CRC
R. Vander Ploeg, Secr./Treas.
37 Brick Pond Lane
Woodstock, ON N4V 1G1
Phone: (519) 539-2117

FRESH FACT

(NC)—Peaches, nectarines and plums from California reach Canada within three to five days after harvest. These fruit are picked and shipped when they are mature but firm. Tree fruit will ripen at home by placing them in a loosely closed paper bag on the counter for one to three days.

- News Canada

Classifieds

Teachers

GEORGETOWN, ONT.:
Georgetown District Christian School a growing school of 270 students, has an immediate need for a **Grade six maternity leave replacement** to begin March 25, 2002. We also have openings at the **primary and intermediate levels for September 2002**. CSTC and/or OTC certification and ability to teach French are appreciated. Please mail your application/ resume to:

Corrie Bootsma, Principal
Georgetown District Christian School
11643 Trafalgar Rd, R.R.#1
Georgetown, Ontario L7G 4S4
For questions
Tel: 905-877-4221
Fax: 905-877-1483
or email: bootsma@axxent.ca

BARRIE, ONT.:
Timothy Christian School, Barrie
A growing, interdenominational Christian School in beautiful Simcoe County - 280 students from JK - Grade 8. TCS is a school actively working out a renewed strategic plan, including plans for a new facility that will meet the needs of learners today and into the future.
Junior and Intermediate openings for September. Strength in music and band could be used in one of the positions.
Forward resume, along with a personal statement of faith to:

Mr. Leo Smit, Principal
Timothy Christian School
49 Ferris Lane
Barrie, Ontario L4M 2Y1
Phone: 705-726-6621
Fax: 705-726-8571
Email: tcs@barint.on.ca

CAMBRIDGE, ONT.:
Cambridge Christian School invites applications, for the following positions: **Primary** Teacher (definite, one year position), **Junior/Intermediate** Teacher (possible position); experience and expertise in Computers and Phys. Ed., would be considered assets, Please send a Letter of Application and Resume to:,

Andy Vander Ploeg, Principal,
Cambridge Christian School,
229 Myers Road,,
Cambridge, ON N1R 7H3,
Phone: 519-623-2261
Fax: 519-623-4042
Application deadline is April 2, 2002

WELLANDPORT, ONT.:
Wellandport Christian School invites applications from qualified teachers for the following possible openings:

- primary division
- junior division
- intermediate division
- special education (50%)

Please forward your resume to :

Wm. Thies, Principal
Wellandport Christian School
Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0
Phone: 905-386-6272
Fax: 905-386-7184
E-mail: wcs@law.on.ca

To advertise in *Christian Courier*, call our toll-free number: 1-800-969-4838.

CALGARY, ALTA.:
Calgary Christian School is accepting applications for three positions for the 2002 - 2003 school year: a FTE **High School English** teacher; a .75 FTE **Middle School French** teacher; and a .65 FTE **Gr. 4-6 French** teacher. Please send resume, statement of faith and philosophy to:

Anita Veeneman, K-6 Principal,
2839 - 49 St SW,
Calgary, AB T3E 3X9
Fax 242-6682
E-mail: aveeneman@CSCE.net.
Or send to
John Messelink, HS Principal,
5029 -26 Ave. SW,
Calgary AB T3E 0R5
Fax: 403-686-1281
E-mail: jmesselink@CSCE.net.

REXDALE, ONT.:
Timothy Christian School, Rexdale, Ontario has possible teaching positions for the 2002-2003 school year. Our school of 189 students and 14 staff members was esablished in 1958 and is situated in the northwest suburb of Toronto, known as Rexdale. If you are interested in being part of a team of dedicated teachers supported by a committed Christian community, we invite you to apply. We look forward to assisting you to use your talents and gifts as a teacher in our school as we prepare God's children for service in His Kingdom. Please send resumes or direct inquiries to:

Principal
Timothy Christian School
28 Elmhurst Drive
Rexdale, Ontario M9W 2J5
Phone: 416-741-5770
Fax: 416-741-3359
E-mail:
timothychristian@rogers.com

OTTAWA, ONT.:
Ottawa Christian School is interested in applications from qualified, Christian teachers with a passion for teaching children from a Christian perspective. Openings are for September 2002 due to growth and restructuring. We are looking for a **French specialist** position for **grades five to eight, a primary** position, a **junior** position, and an **intermediate** position. A **combination of French** and **inter- mediate** and /or **junior** positions is possible. We have 236 students from junior kindergarten to grade eight and are in the exciting stage of planning for growth in a multi denominational community. Please submit your resume to:

Mrs. Helleman, Principal
Ottawa Christian School
2191 Benjamin Ave
Ottawa, Ont. K2A 1P6
or fax to 1-613-722-5836 or
e-mail: principal@ocschool.org

Personals

69-year-old Christian gentleman in Alberta seeking Christian woman companionship to enjoy life with. 55-69 years old. I enjoy camping, travelling, fishing, mechanics, etc. I am an active person and very involved in church work.
Please send letters to **File #2727, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd,, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**

SMITHERS, B.C.
Bulkley Valley Christian School, located in the scenic Bulkley Valley, has a number of teaching positions available for the 2002-03 school year. The openings include **kindergarten, elementary, middle school, and high school French, science/math, home economics, and industrial arts.**
Bulkley Valley Christian operates two campuses and serves a student body of 475 students. The school is rooted in the Reformed tradition but contains a diverse denominational mix. Applications and inquires are invited; we look forward to talking with you. Please contact:

John Bronsema, Principal
Bulkley Valley Christian School
P.O. Box 3635
Smithers, B.C. V0J 2N0
Phone: 250-847-4238
Fax: 250-847-3564

For Sale

Boat for Sale - Charger

- perfect for waterskiing
- Yamaha 115 Horse Power
- Ski Pole, Skies
- Trailer - shore lander - aluminum rims
- 2 covers, 2 prop.

Excellent condition
If you love waterskiing, you must check it out!
Call 905-934-1952

Bed and Breakfast

Going to **Friesland**?
For your bed and breakfast accommodation, we would like to welcome you to our farm in the town of Ureterp. This town is located close to Drachten, Groningen, and the city of Leeuwarden. We have two comfortable double rooms, a livingroom, and a nice bathroom available.
Fam de Jong/Koenders
De Mersken 14, 9247 WK
Ureterp, Friesland
Contact Ph: **011-31-512-301936**
E-mail: **paulakoenders@planet.nl**
See us at: **www.bedandbreakfast.nl**

Visiting the Niagara Peninsula? Stay for a night or more at:
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Call **905-562-5656** for more info.
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Call today - Free delivery at home

OPENINGS AT ABBOTSFORD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
for the
2002/03 SCHOOL YEAR

Abbotsford Christian School, a multi-denominational school system serving over 1000 students at 3 campuses, is inviting applications for a number of openings:

Elementary (K-7)

- Music teacher
- Classroom teacher

Secondary (grades 8 - 12)

- Vice Principal, Student Services (student life and student discipline)
- Special Education/Learning Assistance Coordinator
- Art
- English
- French
- Home Economics (textiles)
- Math
- Technical Education (woodworking/construction)

For more information contact one of the principals:

Berta den Haan, Principal
Heritage Campus (K-7)
2884 Mission Hwy.
Abbotsford, BC V2S 3Y2
Phone: 604-850-5342
Fax: 604-859-9995
bdenhaan@uniserve.com

Dave Loewen, Principal
Clayburn Hills Campus (K-7)
3939 Old Clayburn Rd.
Abbotsford, BC V3G 1J9
Phone: 604-850-2694
Fax: 604-850-7075
dloewen@uniserve.com

Ed Noot, Principal
Secondary Campus
35011 Old Clayburn Rd.
Abbotsford, BC V2S 7L7
Phone: 604-850-5342
Fax: 604-859-2240
enoot@uniserve.com

Miscellaneous

TEACH THE CHILDREN WELL

Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools

Canada's primary producer of Christian school curriculum resources

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OACS

Christian teaching and learning materials developed by Christian school teachers.

"... we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord." Ps. 78:4

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Classifieds

Teachers

RIMBEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

located in **Central Alberta** has openings for the following positions for the fall of 2002.

Kindergarten Teacher - .5 FTE (475 hours on instruction).

Jr. High Teacher - Language Arts and Bible teacher in a home-room setting. Experience in teaching Math, and coaching, drama, or yearbook would be an asset.

Sr. High Teacher -Math/Science, experience in computers would be valuable. Applicant must be qualified to teach advanced level Math and be willing to accept other junior high or secondary teaching assignments.

Salary, benefits, and other information are available upon request. Please send a cover letter, statement of faith and philosophy of Christian education, and a resume including credentials to:

Mr. Mark Vander Laan, Principal
Box 90
Rimbey, AB T0C 2J0
Phone/Fax: 403-843-3904
E-mail: richrsc@telusplanet.net
Deadline for applications: April 15, 2002

OACS
ONTARIO ALLIANCE OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

TEACHERS

Do you want to teach in a Christian school in Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick or P.E.I.? Check out positions with the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools at
www.oacs.org
Updated weekly

MARANATHA CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
Windsor, Ontario
Is expanding to include Grade 12 in September 2002

Elementary Division

We invite applications for a grade 2, a grade 5, a grade 6, a grade 8 and a French grade 3 through10 position. Computer literate teachers trained to teach from a Christian perspective and who demonstrate a vibrant Christian walk are encouraged to contact us.

Secondary Division

Dynamic teachers interested in a growing interdenominational school are invited to apply for a Biology/Chemistry position in grades 11 and 12.

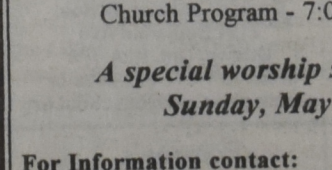
Send applications and complete resume to:
William Van Dyke, Principal
Maranatha Christian Academy
939 Northwood Street, Windsor, ON N9E 2B4
Information: 519-966-7424; fax: 519-966-9519
E-mail: office@maranathachristian.ca

Events

EASTER CELEBRATION

Pro Musica Choir
Conductor: Ian Sadler
Special Guest: Carolyn Stronks-Zeyl, Flautist

SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2002. 8:00 P.M.
Tickets at the Dutch Shop and at the door.



MOUNTAINVIEW CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
290 Main Street East, Grimsby
Admission $10.00 per person
$25.00 per family

Students
of
London District Christian Secondary School
present
A TALE OF TWO CITIES
Based on a novel by Charles Dickens
Directed by Frances Patry
April 12, 13, 19, 20
Advance Tickets Only: **$10** (or **$9**, Groups of 10+)
24 Braesyde Avenue, London ON N5W 1V3
Contact: LDCSS students or school office at
519-455-4360

SPRINGDALE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
1466 - 5TH SIDEROAD, BRADFORD, ONTARIO
will be celebrating its
50TH ANNIVERSARY
on
May 4th & 5th, 2002

All former members and friends are cordially invited to attend.

An Open House is planned for Saturday, May 4th
Social Time - 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Reception - 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Church Program - 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

A special worship service will be held on Sunday, May 5th at 10:00 a.m.

For Information contact:
Rita Weening (905) 775-2680
Pat Scholten (905) 775-6553 email: shonet@primus.ca

Miscellaneous

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Miscellaneous

TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST

...about self medicating

(NC)—The Canadian Pharmacists Association reminds you that the next time you come into the pharmacy to buy a cough syrup or cold remedy, something for a headache, or any over-the-counter medicine, stop and talk to your pharmacist to make sure it's the best way to treat your symptoms.

Your pharmacist — the medication expert — can provide advice and information about choosing, taking and storing your medicine so you always get the best from it. He or she can also help you decide when not to take medications.

- News Canada

What causes Dermatitis?

(NC)—Q: ***What are the causes of contact dermatitis and how do I stop it?***

A: Contact dermatitis (a non-allergic skin reaction) accounts for 80% of all contact-related skin conditions. Water, soaps, detergents, plants, foods, cosmetics, polishes and solvents can all irritate your skin, causing it to feel dry, inflamed and even bleed. In some cases, discomfort may be severe enough to interfere with daily activities at work and in the home. Using a skin protectant like Prevex Cream can greatly reduce the impact of irritants and help prevent problems like contact dermatitis.

- News Canada

Miscellaneous

Send your anniversary, birthday and other important family notices to: Christian Courier at fax #: 905-682-8313 or by e-mail to: ccadpromo@aol.com

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is $7.50 per line, or $1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

March 30	**Annual Easter Concert**, Pro Musica Choir, Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby**, Ont. See ad in this issue.
April 5	**Inauguration Ceremony** for Dr. John Byl. Redeemer University College 7:30 p.m. See ad in this issue.
April 6	**Spring Concert of Praise**, St.George's Anglican Church, **Guelph.** See ad in this issue.
April 12,13	London District CSS, presents: A Tale of Two Cities. **London** Ont. See ad in this issue.
April 13	**Spring Concert of Praise**, King St. United Church, **Trenton**, 7:30 p.m. See ad in this issue.
April 19,20	London District CSS, presents: A Tale of Two Cities. **London** Ont. See ad in this issue
April 20	**Spring Concert of Praise**, Springdale Christian Ref. Church, **Bradford,** Ont. See ad this issue.
April 20	**Festival of Praise concert**, Centennial Hall, 550 Wellington St., **London**, Ont. See ad this issue.
April 20	Of Spring and God's Creation, **Pro Musica Choir**, Port Nelson United Church, 3132 South Drive, **Burlington**, Ont. 8 p.m. Adults $12, Seniors/Students $10, Families $30, $2 off in advance. Ian Sadler, conductor, Brent Fifield organ, Yifan Shi, piano, Sheila Xia, violin. Includes Sonatina for Violin and Piano by Peter Koning, Madrigals, sacred selections by Purcell, Bissell, Sirett & Rutter. **Call 905-632-1347.**
April 21	Calgary 1st CRC 50th Anniv. Former members welcome. For info. 403-243-2244 See ad in this issue.
April 27	**Redeemer** University College **Choir** will be in concert at the **Wallaceburg** CRC 7:30 p.m. Freewill offering.
May 3-4	Conference on Biblical Evangelism, **Jordan Stn.** See ad in this issue.
May 4	Chapel Singers, West Lincoln Hospital Benefit Concert, Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby,** Ont.
May 4	Cephas CRC, **Peterborough, Ont**. 50th Anniv. Dinner May 4, Special Services May 5. See ad.
May 4, 5	Springdale CRC 50th Anniversary events. **Bradford,** Ont. See ad in this issue.
June 1-2	Williamsburg CRC 50th anniversary, **Williamsburg**, Ont. See ad in this issue.

Christian Courier **helps Christians across North America apply their living faith to the business of living. Your donation to Reformed Faith Witness supports this ministry. Along with our thanks for your cheque, we'll send you a tax receipt for donations of $10 (Cdn.) or more.**

FROM COAST TO COAST

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

English Radio:
Back to God Hour

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Burns Lake - CFLO	9:15 am	1400
Osoyoos - CJOR	8:00 am	1490
Penticton - CKOR	8:00 am	800
Port Alberni - CJAV	7:00 pm	1240
Prince George - CIRX	7:00 am	94.3
Princeton - CHOR	8:00 am	1400
Smithers - CFBV	9:15 am	1230
Summerland - CHOR	8:00 am	1450
Vernon - CJIB	9:30 pm	940

ALBERTA

Brooks - CIBQ	8:00 am	1340
Ft. McMurray-CJOK	8:30 am	1230
High River - CHRB	6:30 pm	1140
Edmonton - CJCA	6:00 pm	930
Westlock - CFOK	7:30 am	1370

SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan - CJSL	8:00 am	1280
Weyburn - CFSL	8:00 am	1190

MANITOBA

Altona - CFAM	9:30 am	950
Steinbach - CHSM	8:00 am	1250
Winnipeg - CKJS	9:00 am	810

ONTARIO

Atikokan - CHAK	9:30 am	1240
Chatham - CFCO	6:30 am	630
Fort Frances - CFOB	9:30 am	640
Guelph - CJOY	8:30 am	1460
Hamilton - CHAM	7:30 am	820
Kapuskasing - CKAP	7:00 am	580
London - CKSL	7:00 am	1410
Newmarket - CKDX	9:00 am	88.5
Oshawa - CKDO	8:00 am	1350
Owen Sound -CFOS	7:00 am	560
Pembroke - CHVR	10:00 am	96.7
Sarnia - CHOK	7:30 am	1070
Stratford - CJCS	8:30 am	1240
Windsor - CKLW	7:30 am	800
Wingham - CKNX	10:30 am	920

NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John - CHSJ	9:00 am	94.1

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown - CFCY	7:00 am	630

NOVA SCOTIA

Bridgewater -- CKBW	7:30 am	1000
Digby - CKDY	6:00 am	1420
Halifax - CFDR	8:30 am	780
Liverpool -- CKBW	7:30 am	94.5
Kentville - CKEN	8:30 am	1490
Middleton - CKAD	8:30 am	1350
NewGlasgow -CKEC	7:30 am	1320
Shelburne -- CKBW	7:30 am	93.1
Sydney - CJCB	7:00 am	1270
Weymouth - CKDY	8:30 am	103.1

Kid's Corner-Radio
Drayton Valley, AB- CIBW ... 8:30 am-Sunday 92.9fm
Nordegg, AB - CHBW ... 8:30 am-Sunday 93.9fm
Rocky Mtn. House, AB - CHBW ... 8:30 am-Sunday 94.5fm
Prince Rupert, BC - CIAJ ... 10 am-Saturday 100.7fm
Niagara Falls, ON - CJRN ... 7:30am-Sunday 710am

Television:
Primary Focus

ALBERTA
Lethbridge - CJIL
Monday - 10:00 pm
Saturday - 3:00 pm
ONTARIO - CTS
Saturday - 7:30 pm

Check your local listings for cable outlets airing *Primary Focus*.

Saturdays:
PACIFIC — B.C. .... 2 pm
MOUNTAIN — AB ... 3 pm
CENTRAL — SK & MB .....
4 pm Sunday
EASTERN — ON & QC ...
5 pm Sunday
ATLANTIC — NB, NS, PEI ...
6 pm Sunday
NFLD ... 6:30 pm Sunday

3475 Mainway
PO Box 5070
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Jordan Gospel Outreach presents:

A Reformed Conference on Biblical Evangelism

Guest Speakers: Rev. Maurice Roberts and Dr. Joel Beeke
Topics: A Return to the Bible, Puritan Evangelism, Revival
Held at: **Heritage Reformed Congregation**
4171 15th Street, Jordan Station
First Topic - Friday evening, May 3 - 7:30 p.m.
Second Topic - Saturday morning, May 4 - 10:00 a.m.
Third Topic - Saturday afternoon, May 4 - 1:00 p.m.
For information and to register contact Renee @ **905-688-8800** or Fax: **905-688-8808** or e-mail us at **hrcconf@hotmail.com**. Although there is *no* charge, seats must be reserved by April 4.
"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of Hosts." Zech. 4:6

Festival of Praise

featuring
THE ONTARIO CHRISTIAN
MALE CHORUS ASSOCIATION
(OVER 300 MEN)
APRIL 20, 2002 - 7:30 P.M.
CENTENNIAL HALL, LONDON
550 WELLINGTON STREET
TICKETS: $13.00 NO RESERVED SEATS
FOR INFORMATION CALL: 519-637-4357 OR 519-485-1113

Inauguration Ceremony for Dr. John Byl

On April 5, 2002, an Inauguration Ceremony and Public Address for full professorship of Dr. John Byl, Professor of Physical Education, will be held.

The title of the address is "Coming to Terms With Play, Game, Sport, and Athletics: Spirit-filled Game Participation."

The Ceremony will take place at 7:30 pm in Redeemer University College Auditorium located at 777 Garner Road E. Ancaster, On L9K 1J4.
Office of the V.P. (Academic) (905) 648-2131 ext. 4414

REDEEMER
University College

Spring Concerts of Praise

by the
Choirs, concert band & Kooij Sisters
of the
Ontario Christian Music Assembly
Under the direction of ***Leendert Kooij***
With ***Andre Knevel*** *at the organ* ***7:30 p.m.***

ADMISSION: *Adults $10.00 Children under 12 – FREE*

April 6	April 13	April 20
St.George's Anglican	King St. United	Springdale CRC
GUELPH	TRENTON	BRADFORD
(519)821-9384	(613)392-5274	(905)775-2230

For all concerts call OCMA Toronto (416) 636-9779

News

Canadian volunteers help set up Christian radio station in Venezuelan jungle

Alan Doerksen

BEAMSVILLE, Ont. — "Getting our hands dirty for Jesus" is how Rev. Allan McGuirl, the director of Galcom International, describes his agency's recent mission projects in Venezuela. In January and February, Galcom arranged for two short-term mission trips to Maripa, a small city on the edge of the Amazon jungle, in southeastern Venezuela, to construct a Christian radio station.

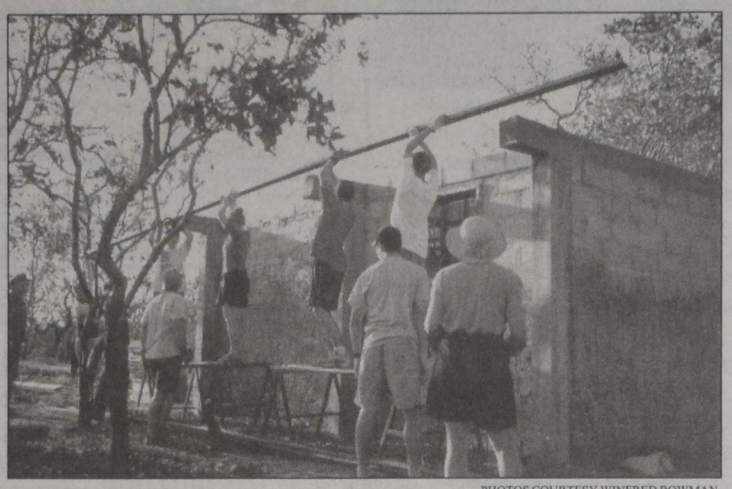
Galcom International is a Hamilton, Ontario-based mission agency with a vision of providing durable technical equipment for communicating the Gospel worldwide. Galcom has been fulfilling its mission by constructing Christian radio stations in remote corners of the world, and distributing 390,000 fixed-tuned radios (which can only pick up one radio station: a local Christian one). The agency takes its name from the Hebrew word Gal, meaning commitment (from Psalm 37:5); Com, the Hebrew word for communication; and International, referring to the worldwide focus of the mission.

Radio station in a suitcase

Galcom has helped build radio stations in remote areas such as northern Iraq, the mountains near Cuzco, Peru, and its latest project in Maripa, Venezuela. For each building project, most of the radio equipment is brought in suitcases by teams of volunteers from various churches. Once operating these stations can either use local programming or rebroadcast programs beamed in by satellite from Canada or other countries.

McGuirl went to Mariba from January 15 to 24 with a team of 20, including Galcom's engineer Bruce Foreman, and volunteers from two Ontario churches.

From February 18 to 27, a second team traveled to Maripa under the sponsorship of Galcom, including Foreman, and a team of 16 members of Calvary Gospel Church in Beamsville, Ont. Among them was Winfred Bowman, son of recently-retired *Christian Courier* circulation manager Grace Bowman.



PHOTOS COURTESY WINFRED BOWMAN

Volunteers from Calvary Gospel Church hoist up I-beams to begin construction of the roof of the radio station control room/studio.

On the edge of civilization

Bowman describes Maripa as being "on the border of where the civilized part of the province reaches the indigenous part of the province: the Amazon jungle." Maripa is a good base from which to do outreach work to local indigenous people, because they often come up the Caura River to get supplies in the city, explains Bowman. He and the other volunteers stayed in a missionary compound in Maripa.

The Christian radio station near Maripa had been started last summer, when a team of women from Toronto's People's Church set up the radio tower, explains Bowman. In February, Bowman's team put together the station itself. Construction work included pouring concrete floors, putting up blocks for the walls, installing the roof, and connecting the transmission cable from the radio tower to the station.

Bowman sometimes travels around the world with his work as a mechanical engineer with Siemens Westinghouse, but this was his first trip to South America. While in Venezuela, he picked up a few words of Spanish, but fluency in the language was not necessary, because local missionaries acted as translators for the team.

The young people from the team around one of the radio tower guywire footings.

The team show the Jesus video in Spanish on a street in Maripa.

30 new Christians

The work was mostly physical, but there was also some outreach work. "We had an opportunity to go into Maripa and show the Jesus video in Spanish," says Bowman. "We had over 200 people there in the street — over 100 kids at least. We had treats for all the kids that were there."

At the end of the video, there was an opportunity for viewers to pray to receive Jesus into their lives. The team asked for those who had done so to come forward to receive a Spanish New Testament. More than 30 people came forward, reports Bowman. "We trust that many came to salvation that day."

The trip to Venezuela was "definitely a learning experience for me," asserts Bowman. It was his first short-term mission trip, and his first time to do radio-related work. Other volunteers on his team ranged in age from teenagers to seniors. While in Venezuela, they also got to experience some of the local color — fishing for piranha, and seeing alligators and monkeys in the Amazonian jungle.

Shortly before he took the trip, Bowman had an operation, but he was able to make a full recovery and return to his job for a few days before flying to Venezuela. "God has blessed me with a good recovery," he says.

Planting a new church

Next summer, local missionary Pastor Zabdiel Arenas is hoping to build a new evangelical church in Maripa, to minister to new believers there, reports Bowman. There are "definitely no evangelical churches there," he says. Arenas would like five teams of volunteers to help him with that project.

According to Galcom, Arenas' parents have worked for more than 47 years in the Venezuelan jungle, sharing Christ and planting many churches. Once the new radio station is fully operating, Pastor Arenas will go to remote villages in the Maripa area to give some of Galcom's fixed-band radios to poor families, who will then be able to listen to the new station.

Local people got a foretaste of that in January, when the Galcom team of volunteers turned on the transmitter for the first time, and broadcast a program with Pastor Arenas' father proclaiming the word of God. A Galcom newsletter reports, "What was exciting was that the truck driver who was our chauffeur got word that we were on the air and turned on his truck radio, went back into town and was stopping at houses and telling everyone to turn on the radios. We had the 500 fixed-band radios tuned at the camp and a number of the national workers, cooks, gardeners, and cattle people began to listen to the music and Pastor Arenas — and what a sight to see the smiles on their faces.... In that area, we will have a potential listening audience of over 160,000 people, with less than two per cent known believers at present."

News Digest

Serving time with a pig

PAINESVILLE, Ohio (Ananova) — A man in Ohio who called a police officer a pig has served his sentence with a sow.

A lunchtime crowd jeered and joked with Steven Thompson as he stood on a city sidewalk next to the 350-pound pig in a pen for two hours. There was also a sign reading "This is not a police officer."

Painesville Municipal Judge Michael Cicconetti ordered the sentence instead of jail time following Thompson's guilty plea to disorderly conduct.

Thompson, 44, had used the word "pig" while shouting obscenities in a Jan. 28 confrontation with a city police officer.

"I made a mistake, and now I'm sorry and I'm paying for it," Thompson said in a speech next to the pen. A farmer from nearby loaned the city the sow.

Snowmobile drive-through

PITEA, Sweden (Reuters) — Hungry snowmobile riders in northern Sweden can now eat a hamburger without getting off their machine. The first McDonald's drive-through for snowmobiles opened in February in the town of Pitea, about 130 km south of the Arctic Circle.

"There are 6,000 snowmobiles registered in Pitea and I thought why don't we build a special track for them," Eva Olsson, marketing manager at McDonald's Pitea, told Reuters.

Snowmobilers in Sweden must follow specially marked tracks, or else they face fines.

Delinquents can't apply

TORONTO — NASA is setting strict rules for who can go to the international space station. "Even if they have the millions of dollars needed for a space station vacation, delinquents, liars, drunks and the infamous need not apply," reports the Associated Press.

"That's the word from NASA.... A candidate's past and present conduct must be assessed according to the criteria, with disqualification considered in the case of delinquency or misconduct in prior employment or military service. Other disqualifying traits: criminal, dishonest, infamous, or notoriously disgraceful conduct; intentional false statement or fraud; habitual use of intoxicating beverages to excess; abuse of narcotics..., and membership or sponsorship in organizations which adversely affect the public's confidence in the space station or its partners."